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RAJIV GANDHI: THE END OF AN ERA
A. S. Raman

DEMOCRATIC RESURGENCE IN BLACK AFRICA
John A. Wiseman

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Incorporating The Fortnightly

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Contents

		Page
Hungary One Year On	Emil Rado	1
Rajiv Gandhi: The End of an Era	A. S. Raman	4
Democratic Resurgence in Black Africa	John A Wiseman	7
The Nature of Regional Conflict: A Review of 1990 — Part Three: The Legacy of Superpower Competition	Stephen Chan and Jonathan Alner	14
Papua New Guinea: Where the Stone Age Meets the Space Age	Martin C. Needler	19
Still the Gulf Crisis	Leo Muray	23
The Psychological Understanding of Crime	L. F. Lowenstein	27
Mozart: Saint or Sinner?	Ruth Ward	34
Voice of New Zealand: The Poetry of Allen Curnow	A. L. Rowse	37
The Sound of Radio Drama	Tim Gebbels	40
A Great German Novel	H. P. Rickman	45
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT		49
Leo Muray, Molly Mortimer, Paul Mackintosh, Betty Abel.		
Shorter Reviews		55

P 5439

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HUNGARY ONE YEAR ON

by Emil Rado

'AFTER foreign powers crushed our revolutions of 1848 and 1956, we could comfort ourselves with the belief that if only these revolutions had succeeded we would now be a prosperous Western democracy', Jozsef Horvath, a lecturer in Budapest's University of Economics said to me. 'But *this* revolution was not put down, and there are limits to how long one can go on blaming the ills of the present on past governments', he added.

It is to be hoped that Hungary's three-party coalition government, which has celebrated its first year in office, comes to a similar conclusion. Returning to Budapest a year after the first free election in over 40 years, it has been hard to avoid the impression that the debates in Parliament (and especially within the coalition government) had more to do with how to return to the status quo before 1948, when the Communists took over, than with how best to go forward to 1992.

The fact that much of the system of one-party rule was liquidated by the last reform-Communist government itself has made it possible to avoid most of the vendettas against individuals that followed the more abrupt changes of regime elsewhere in Eastern Europe. But in their place there has been a long, obsessive debate about drafting a law to compensate all those who had suffered material injury under the Communist regime. As FIDESZ, one of the three main Opposition parties, has pointed out, almost every living Hungarian has been harmed by the Communist regime; and as the real culprits are conspicuous by having departed to the other world, there is no-one left to compensate the living, except the claimants themselves.

Prime Minister Jozsef Antall of the Democratic Forum and his Christian Democrat coalition partners secretly sympathize with the FIDESZ

argument. But in the end they had to yield to pressure from the third coalition partner, the Smallholder Party, whose only policy objective has been to turn back the political clock to 1947. (For this concession they had to pay by discarding Dr. Jozsef Torgyan, their rabble-rousing parliamentary leader, who was becoming increasingly unacceptable to the other two coalition partners.)

The compensation law finally agreed in principle among the coalition partners will enable persons (or their direct descendants) dispossessed of their land after 8 June 1949 to claim compensation, up to a maximum of 60 hectares. Those willing to farm as their main occupation may actually reclaim the land they had lost — though this may well give rise to a fresh round of compensation claims from peasants who had cultivated and improved that land for the past 40 years, and would now be rendered landless! Those who had been deprived of other property are expected to receive 100% compensation for a loss of up to Ft. 100,000 (about £1,500), and on a sharply declining scale thereafter.

The cost of the total compensation package has been estimated at about Fts. 100 billion (about £750 million). Unless it is raised by taxation (which would be politically suicidal, as it would explode the pretence that one can have something for nothing), the injection of such a large sum into an already inflationary economy would spell disaster. Hence compensation is likely to be paid in irredeemable interest-bearing bonds, that can be used only for buying shares in public enterprises as and when they are being privatised. It is still unclear whether compensation will also be paid to persons whom the previous regime injured in other ways (e.g. through political imprisonment).

The passing and implementation of a compensation law — a final peace treaty with the ghosts of the past — is also a precondition for making real progress with the privatisation of industry and commerce. So far only 2% (by value) of public enterprises has been privatised. 'You cannot float an enterprise whose ownership is in dispute' explained an official of the State Property Disposal Agency to me.

I asked Professor Hajna Lorinc, one of Hungary's leading economists, how she rated the Government's economic performance so far. 'Bear in mind,' she replied 'that their room for manoeuvre has been extremely limited. Hungary earns some 40% of its national income by exporting. During the past year we have done well to raise our exports to $7 billion and the proportion of these going to the West to over 50%. But our debt service payments at $4.5 billion take up almost two thirds of our export income. With $7 billion worth of export earnings chasing $2.5 billion imports, it is little wonder that we have inflation running at about 40%. Moreover, having only recently agreed with the Soviet Union to settle our trade balances in dollars, we were staggered when around last Christmas the Russians declared themselves unable to pay. Normally they take about 30% of our exports, and by then they had accumulated a deficit of over $1 billion. So we have had to suspend our exports to them until this matter is settled. Meanwhile some of our largest industrial enterprises

are facing massive lay-offs and possible bankruptcy.'

With economic problems of such severity to cope with, it was surprising to find that the Cabinet minister most highly esteemed by the public was the Minister of Finance, Mihaly Kupa. A career economist who belongs to no party, he was appointed to his present post by the Prime Minister only a few months ago, when it became clear that the previous holder was not up to the task. The key planks of his rescue plan are to produce a balanced budget, bring inflation under control, contain unemployment, resume the growth of Gross National Product, and reach convertibility by 1994. This plan has won widespread public and parliamentary approval, even within the Opposition. Asked a few days ago whether he was pleased to be regarded as something of a new Messiah, he replied 'Not one bit. Messiahs have a habit of coming to a sticky end.'

Remarkably, the re-scheduling of Hungary's colossal debt is not on the Government's open agenda, for fear of compromising the country's credit standing. Yet it must be obvious even to Hungary's creditors (mostly Western and Japanese commercial banks) that unless the debt burden is eased, Hungary has little chance of modernising its obsolescent industries and thus gaining the ability to earn the exports it needs to service its debts.

Perhaps the most encouraging recent development has been the initiative just before Easter by FIDESZ, one of the opposition parties. It called for a continuous process of off-the-record consultation among the leaders of the six main parliamentary parties, on the key problems facing the country, and the appropriate policy and legislative responses to them. Even more remarkable than the proposal itself has been the alacrity with which all other parties, both Government and Opposition, have welcomed it. After the cordial and constructive spirit that characterised the 1989-90 round-table discussions between the outgoing reform-Communist government and the nascent opposition parties, the atmosphere of acrimony that has been allowed to develop in Parliament since the election has damaged the standing of all parties in the eyes of the electorate. A return to an honest striving for consensus can do nothing but good for the prospects of parliamentary democracy in Hungary.

HUNGARIAN POLITICS: THE KEY PLAYERS

		seats
The Government		
Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)	...	164
Independent Smallholder Party (FKgP)	...	44
Christian Democratic Party (KDNP)	...	21
The Opposition		
Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) ...	...	92
Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) ...	...	33
Alliance of Young Democrats (FIDESZ)	...	21
Independents	...	11

[Emil Rado is a senior lecturer at the University of Glasgow.]

RAJIV GANDHI: THE END OF AN ERA

by A. S. Raman

THE tragic assassination of Rajiv Gandhi marks the end of an era in Indian politics. The curtain comes down on personality cult and goes up on collective leadership. The 106 year old Indian National Congress, now known as the Congress (Indira Gandhi) after the 1969 split brought about by her, can now survive only on the quality of its own membership as it has been denied the charisma of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, Sonia Gandhi, Rajiv's widow, having refused to involve herself in the rough and tumble of party politics.

At the time of writing, it appears, there will be peace and normality in India only with the end of the present elections which have provoked unprecedented violence. Indeed, India is being made to pay a very high price in terms of the lives lost. The toll is already more than 200. Elections in the Indian context have been a necessary evil. They come and go, leaving the politicians richer and the common people poorer — not only poorer but in a worse state of mind with a badly bruised psyche. The voters feel totally demoralised — politically demoralised because of the victories of the wrong candidates with money and muscle, physically because of violence, morally because of the offers of money, sex and liquor, socially because of the caste and communal tensions, economically because of the heavy taxes which follow and the common man naively assumes that there will not be another General Election for five years. Of course, you cannot have democracy without elections which even fascists use as fig leaf for coming to power. So you can't avoid elections. But their evil impact can be minimised with the co-operation of political parties. For, in India, elections are the neglected area of democratic process, candidates paying little attention to their basic ethos and ethics. Is violence not the negation of democracy? The latest and most valuable victim of political violence was Rajiv Gandhi who had to pay for his democratic openness with his life.

Rajiv's tragic and premature death in a big bomb blast at the unseen hands of his enemies was a calamity for which India and the democratic world in general were totally unprepared. There is I suspect a curse on the very name of *Gandhi* — Mahatma Gandhi who was gunned down by a Hindu fanatic, Sanjay Gandhi who died in a terrible flying misadventure which he could have easily avoided, Indira Gandhi who was brutally murdered by Sikh fanatics and now Rajiv Gandhi, blown to bits by a bomb blast caused by the enemies of a stable and prosperous India. It is not good form to speak ill of the dead. Rajiv had his faults. Who doesn't have them? It is after all human to be imperfect. But this is not the time for criticism. This is a moment of deep anguish and sorrow for all Indians who have lost one of their illustrious countrymen in tragic circumstances and he meant to do so much for enhancing their prestige in the international community. Even before his cremation, the intellectually bankrupt

and politically indiscreet Congress(I) top-brass made vulgar and desperate moves to disturb the peace and privacy of Sonia Gandhi by dragging her into their sordid electoral games as their new chief. Their clumsy and inept strategy betrayed not only their greed for power but their insensitivity to the feelings and sentiments of a widow in mourning.

A politician without power is like a cobra without fangs. When he raises his hood menacingly to charge you, you are only amused. But, power or no power, Rajiv Gandhi was different. Even losing his Prime Ministership after the November, 1989 General Election, he remained strong and secure consolidating his firm grip on his party, unlike his mother who, after her party's electoral rout in 1977, found herself deserted by her former colleagues and confidants. Rajiv was aware that his party was in bad shape demanding drastic reforms from within. In fact he expressed his concern poignantly in his address to the Centenary session of the Congress held in Bombay in 1985. The party which was once a vibrant and cohesive grassroot forum for nationalists, over the years declined into a highly personalised and centralised outfit dominated by crooks, sycophants and power brokers. He promised to weed out these undesirable elements and democratise and revitalise the party. But somehow his commitment remained only on paper.

Rajiv had a presence the like of which few politicians of his generation had. Whether as Prime Minister or an ordinary MP, he attracted people like a magnet because of his youth, personal charm, modern outlook, civilised conduct, courage and human touch. He had inherited his grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru's charisma, compassion, elegance, openness and intellectual thrust. Though at first a reluctant politician, in a short span of time, he developed into an effective, affable and dynamic leader of his party and government neither of which could exist without him. He had a way of endearing himself immediately to whosoever came into contact with him, because of his human warmth and social graces. Again, like his grandfather he was the darling of children, to whom he was *Bhai* (brother), as the old man was *Cha cha* (uncle). Rajiv loved them genuinely and with deep concern, not because of their political importance as future voters, but simply because of their natural and unspoken craving for gracious and gentle touch by elders, which he readily provided.

Rajiv Gandhi was born on August 20, 1944, in Bombay, as the elder of the two sons of Indira and Feroze Gandhi. His grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru, described him as 'the 400th million Indian'. But the boy had exposure only to the Western life style and value system under the influence of his Danish governess, Anna Ornsholt. Gradually, like all the Nehrus, he achieved a neat blend of the best of the West and the best of the East. No wonder that he felt so relaxed and comfortable in India and abroad. His critics however foolishly dismissed him as a round peg in a square hole, implying that he was too Western to fit into the Indian context. What he tried to do during his short life was to refine and revitalise the Indian ethos so that it was acceptable to modern sensibility. In fact he was proud to be known as a little Messiah of modernity, eager to take his

country forward by giant leaps into the 21st century.

During his Doon School and Cambridge days, he was academically lacklustre and politically innocent. By temperament and inclination, he was apolitical and hated the very idea of a public career. He was too shy to step into the limelight. In fact he had a carefully nursed 'nice guy' image. Nice to look at, nice to talk to, nice to go for long walks with, nice to share secrets or exchange jokes with, nice all round. Cheerful and carefree. Indian Airlines pilot Rajiv Gandhi was regarded as a thorough gentleman. It was the tragic death of his younger brother, Sanjay, in a plane crash in 1980 that drew him into the mainstream of national affairs more as his mother's counsellor and confidant than as a leader in his own right. He expected to do nothing more important in life than to remain silently and discreetly in the shadow of his mother who he thought was immortal.

Rajiv no doubt took the Congress out of the Gandhian mould. Being young, forward-looking and open-eyed, he was impatient. But the process began with his grandfather who was Gandhi's 'heir'. For Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi had sharp differences over the relevance of the Western concepts and methods to the Indian situation and eventually Nehru had his own way with Gandhi's blessings. The Father of the Nation would have definitely realised the need for the modernisation and liberalisation of the Indian economy and polity. What the Nehrus wanted was a Congress which could deliver the goods in the highly competitive modern world of computers, robots and satellites.

So whatever Indira and her son dreamt of for India and achieved through their dedicated service was worthy of a great country with a glorious past and even a more glorious future. Rajiv's bold and imaginative moves in international diplomacy at its toughest, his determined efforts to involve India in the latest and most sophisticated scientific and technological advances, his ruthlessly progressive programmes for the raising of India's living standards to international levels through rapid industrialisation, modernisation and rationalisation and through a phased process of humanisation of production and distribution systems and his genuine concern for the promotion of effective and mutually honourable interaction between India and the developed countries were perfectly in tune with Nehru's vision of India, which Gandhi himself, if he were alive today, would have gracefully endorsed. For it was not at all his intention to see India condemned perpetually to social obscurantism and economic stagnation — in other words, to see her reduced to the level of underdog in the international community, because of her reluctance or inability to move ahead in step with the rest of the world.

[The author is a former editor of *The Illustrated Weekly* of India.]

DEMOCRATIC RESURGENCE IN BLACK AFRICA

by John A. Wiseman

THE recent, quite remarkable, resurgence of democracy in the states of Eastern Europe brought about by the collapse of their single-party political systems has grabbed the attention of the world in a very dramatic manner. However, comparatively little attention has been paid to similar developments which have been taking place over most of black Africa. Over the past year or so one has been able to witness in one African state after another the popular rejection of the claims to legitimacy of the single-party model and the insistent demand for a competitive multi-party system as the only valid arrangement for achieving democracy. During this period countless black Africans right across the continent have campaigned vigorously for multi-party democracy. This has often involved great personal cost where reluctant governments have attempted to preserve authoritarian systems of rule through the use of force but the strength of popular feeling has often forced rulers to give way to public demand.

Of course, even before the recent resurgence, multi-party democracy had never been entirely eclipsed in black Africa. In Botswana, The Gambia, Mauritius and, in a limited form, Zimbabwe it had remained intact throughout the post-independence period. Mauritius had provided examples of peaceful change of government through the ballot box in 1982 and again in 1983. The survival of multi-partyism as a viable alternative in African politics had also been enhanced by the revival of this type of system in several states following periods of authoritarian rule. Most usually this was associated with a process of demilitarisation whereby military governments wishing to return to the barracks had revived democracy as a way of transferring power to civilians. This had taken place in Nigeria (with a further revival planned for 1992), Ghana (twice), Uganda, Liberia, Sudan, Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic. Only in Senegal had a single-party state transformed itself into a multi-party one without military intervention. These revivals were not always a great success but the fact that they took place at all was an indication of popular support for democracy in Africa and the belief that that was what 'ought' to exist.

By the end of the 1980s, then, the existence of democracy in black Africa was real but rather limited in extent. However, change was on the way and by the end of the first year of the new decade the resurgence of democracy was widespread and to a greater or lesser extent had affected almost all states. By spring 1991 it was possible to classify groups of states on the basis of the progress of democratic resurgence which had taken place. The most far-reaching category includes those states where multi-party systems have already been created and where competitive elections, often the first for several decades, have taken place. The second category includes those where the return to democracy is fairly advanced with a new constitution in place and opposition parties operating legally. The third group includes states where promises of a restoration of democracy have

been made but where moves in that direction have been limited or, in some cases, might appear to lack credibility. A fourth group would include those states where popular agitation for democracy was evident but where incumbent governments were still refusing to make changes. In some of the latter the demand for democracy was fairly muted but in many it was very dramatic indeed. Only in a couple of states was there no sign of democratic resurgence.

Although it is impossible in an article of this length to go into detail on every African state some description of events is necessary to appreciate the magnitude of the changes. In the first quarter of 1991 three incumbent regimes were replaced through the ballot box. In the island state of Cape Verde legislative elections held in January gave nearly three quarters of the vote to the new opposition Movement for Democracy (MPD). In the new National Assembly the MPD held fifty-six seats as against the twenty-three won by the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) which had previously ruled without permitted opposition since independence from Portugal in 1975. The following month the MPD leader, Antonio Mascarennas Monteiro, defeated the incumbent president, Aristides Pereira, by winning over 70% of the votes in the presidential elections. In another ex-Portuguese state, Sao Tome and Principe, similar events were taking place. In a referendum held in 1990 only 3% of the voters had expressed opposition to the introduction of a multi-party system. When legislative elections were held in January 1991 the new opposition Democratic Convergence Party (PCD) won a majority of the seats ousting the ruling Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe (MLSTP). President Pinto da Costa had already announced that he would not be contesting the presidential election and in March Miguel Trovoada, who had returned from political exile in 1990, was elected to the presidency. In the West African state of Benin a former World Bank administrator, Nicephore Soglo, defeated incumbent President Kerekou in March 1991 although here the election was marred somewhat by violence in the north of the country where Kerekou maintained strong support.

In other African states experiencing multi-party elections for the first time in several decades ruling parties managed to retain power. In legislative elections held in Gabon in October 1990 the Democratic Party of Gabon (PDG) won a narrow majority by capturing sixty-two seats in the legislature as against the fifty-five won by a total of eight new opposition parties. In November President Bongo made a conciliatory gesture when he included representatives from five of the opposition parties in his new government leaving the PDG with a minority of portfolios. The splintering of new opposition parties was even more apparent in Cote d'Ivoire where twenty-six had come into existence by late 1990. Seventeen parties contested the legislative and presidential elections in late 1990 but the divided nature of the opposition combined with its organisatonal weaknesses led to victory by the ruling Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast (PDCI) led by the ageing President Houphouet-Boigny. Here the opposition won only a small minority of seats although they also gained control of six municipal

councils. In the Comoros Republic there was no incumbent government as such. Attempts were being made to recreate a political system which for many years had been dominated by mercenaries controlled by the infamous Bob Denard until he was ousted by French troops in 1989. In multi-party presidential elections held in March 1990 Said Mohamed Djohar narrowly defeated Mohamed Taki in the second round of voting and promised the full creation of a democratic political system.

Two further states need mentioning at this point although they are not technically examples of the restoration of multi-party systems. It had been widely expected that Zimbabwe would become a single-party state in 1990. President Robert Mugabe had long made it clear that this was his intention and following the victory of his Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in contested elections in March 1990 he claimed an electoral mandate for this move in spite of the fact that it was not in the party's election manifesto. However, resistence to this move within the country at large and within the ruling party itself grew ever stronger. Mugabe continued to favour the change but following its rejection by the ZANU-PF politburo and central committee the idea was abandoned in September 1990 and a multi-party system was retained. In March 1990 a new African democracy emerged with the long awaited independence of Namibia following UN supervised elections in which the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) won a small overall majority of votes and seats. Namibia has an entrenched multi-party system which is supported by all significant political groupings.

There are several African states where new multi-party constitutions are in place and opposition parties are operating legally but in which new competitive elections have yet to take place. In Zambia widespread popular support for a return to democracy became manifest in 1990 and although President Kenneth Kaunda was extremely reluctant he agreed in May to hold a referendum on the issue. In July he announced that the referendum was to be postponed but this provoked such widespread public opposition that in September he bowed to the inevitable and agreed that a multi-party system should be restored without the need for a referendum. At the time of writing several opposition parties have been formed to contest forthcoming elections with the ruling United National Independence Party (UNIP). The most important of the new parties is the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) which has strong support from the trade union movement on the Copperbelt and which developed from the National Interim Committee for Multi-Party Democracy which led the struggle against single-party authoritarianism in 1990.

In both Angola and Mozambique the single-party Marxist-Leninist state idea has been jettisoned in favour of multi-party democracy by the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) which, until late 1990, were the only legal political parties in these two states. In both cases the government has, since independence from Portugal in 1975, been fighting against subversive groups (the national Union for the Total Independence of

Angola — UNITA and the Mozambican National Resistance — RENAMO) which had justified their struggle partly through the absence of democracy. It remains to be seen if UNITA and RENAMO will be willing to compete for power in the freely contested elections designated by the new constitutions of these states. In both Congo and Cameroon the restoration of democratic pluralism has produced a bewildering fragmentation of new opposition parties which can only benefit the ruling Congolese Labour Party (PCT) and the Democratic Rally of Cameroonian People (RDPC) respectively if opposition coalitions are not constructed before forthcoming elections take place. In Congo some seventy new parties had formed by early 1991. In Cameroon large numbers of parties had formed in the French-speaking east of the country although in the English-speaking west the Social Democratic Front (SDF) appeared better organised and unified. Similar opposition fragmentation can be observed in Zaire where the multi-party system was legalised in November 1990. A further question mark hanging over the restoration of democracy in Zaire is whether or not the system can work as long as the quintessentially autocratic figure of President Mobutu Sese Seko still wields power.

There are a large number of states where the movement back to democracy is less advanced but where governments have committed themselves to it. These include Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, Niger and Togo. Referendums on the issue of multipartyism are scheduled to take place in 1991 in Burundi and Rwanda whilst in Tanzania a presidential commission is examining the issue. In Tanzania the very critical view of single-party rule now taken by ex-President Julius Nyerere has been influential in stimulating demands for change. Recent coups in Chad (December 1990), Somalia (January 1991) and Mali (March 1991) have all been accompanied by promises on the part of incoming governments to restore democracy. The final, and arguably supremely important, example of an African state where a commitment to democracy has been made by the government but where the mechanisms for implementing it remain to be established is the Republic of South Africa. Intense speculation surrounds the question of whether or not a democratic constitutional consensus is possible in South Africa but there is little doubt that a democratic non-racial South Africa would be a great boost to the cause of democracy in Africa.

In all the cases mentioned so far at least some movement towards democracy can be observed even though some are far more advanced than others. However any account of the resurgence of democracy in black Africa also has to take into account that group of states where popular demand has, so far, been in vain. Recent experience suggests that, in some of these, governments may yet bow to popular pressure but even if this were not to be the case the strength of popular feeling and activity provides a clear indication of the support for the ideal of democracy. States which are part of this group include the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Swaziland. Mass support for a restoration of multi-party democracy has been especially

strong in Kenya but the government of President Moi has responded only with increased coercion. Since the middle of 1990 scores of protesters have been killed and thousands imprisoned. In August 1990 a leading campaigner for democracy, Bishop Alexander Muge, died in a mysterious 'car crash'. At one stage a leading MP of the ruling KANU party ordered party supporters to chop off the fingers of those giving the two finger multi-party salute although this was later disavowed as official government policy.

In trying to explain the resurgence of democracy in Africa the experience of Eastern Europe has a part to play but it should be seen as just one component in a more complex process. In reality two sets of factors can be identified. The first relates to ongoing features of African politics which kept democracy alive as a viable alternative even during the bad days and the second relates to more time specific factors.

The most important of the ongoing factors is a negative one; the failure of the authoritarian regimes of the single-party and military ruled states. Such regimes always had a weak to non-existent basis of democratic legitimacy but in the past it was frequently argued that the sacrifice of civil liberties was justified because such regimes would provide a sounder basis for stable, honest government which could produce much needed economic development for the benefit of the people. It was even argued, somewhat perversely, that banning legal opposition would make systems more democratic. Three decades of African independence have demonstrated the counterfeit nature of the arguments for authoritarian rule which has led to instability, oppression, corruption, stagnation and starvation. Even during this period one could witness the phenomenon, which I described in my recent book on the subject, of the 'persistence of the democratic alter ego'. That is, even in the most authoritarian states the notion that competitive democracy ought to be the goal remained remarkably strong. For example, when the monthly magazine *New African* conducted a survey in 1989 of over 22,000 of its African readers it emerged that nearly 80% favoured multi-party democracy in preference to the alternatives. The actual survival of democracy in some states has also been due to the democratic commitment of leaders such as Presidents Seretse Khama and Quett Masire in Botswana and President Dawda Jawara in The Gambia.

Without this bedrock of support for democracy in Africa it is unlikely that events elsewhere would have produced the resurgence that has taken place. However, around the turn of the decade a series of new factors entered the situation. The collapse of single-party rule in Eastern Europe demonstrated clearly that mass public opposition was capable of forcing reluctant authoritarian governments to give way to demands for democratisation. These lessons were not lost on Africans. The subsequent emergence of clear evidence of just how corrupt, inefficient and brutal these regimes had been added further strength to democratic movements in Africa. Related to this was the ending of bi-polar superpower competition in Africa brought about by the exit of one of the superpowers. With the Soviet Union anxious to extricate itself from involvement in Africa, the perceived

need of the superpowers to support authoritarian regimes to block the spread of influence of each other was terminated and outside impediments to democracy were reduced. In part related to this a series of events in Southern Africa also produced a situation more favourable to democracy. Mention has already been made of the emergence of an independent and democratic Namibia in March 1990 but of even greater importance was the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of anti-apartheid organisations in South Africa a month earlier. Apart from raising the prospect of a democratic South Africa the public support of Mandela for multi-partyism was very influential in much of the rest of black Africa due to his revered status.

Whilst pro-democracy movements in Africa were undoubtedly given fresh hope and impetus by events elsewhere it would be both patronising and misleading to ignore the fact it was African people themselves who were mainly responsible for the resurgence of democracy in Africa. In country after country vast numbers of African people have taken to the streets to demand change. Although President Moi of Kenya may dismiss supporters of democracy as 'all hooligans and drug addicts' the reality has been very different. Especially prominent in the demand for democracy have been the educated middle classes (doctors, lawyers, teachers, academics and students), religious groups (both Christian and Muslim) and the urban working class and trade union movement. The primarily urban focus of protest reflects the practical difficulties of organising the scattered peasant majority rather than a differing of interest. Indeed it can be argued with some conviction that the major beneficiaries of democratisation will be the rural dwellers who will constitute a majority of the electorate. In such a situation neglect of the interests of the peasant masses, which has been a feature of so many authoritarian regimes, will be much more difficult, not to say electorally hazardous.

To the extent that there has been an element of contagion in the spread of pro-democracy movements across Africa it has to be recognised that African people have been learning from the experience of other African states and not just copying the example of the citizens of Czechoslovakia or Rumania. The days when Africans were seen as passive recipients of ideas from elsewhere are long gone. Political thinking in Africa is conditioned primarily by the first-hand experience of developments since independence. To the extent that this has been a negative experience in many states the demand for democracy is a demand for a better way of conducting public affairs in Africa.

What still remains to be seen is the longer term effect of democratic resurgence in Africa. Prediction is a hazardous business but may not be entirely invalid. Whilst the movement towards democracy has been general across most of Africa it is likely that there will be considerable variation from state to state in the future. Whilst some states may well be able to consolidate their democracies others may not. In states such as Chad, Somalia or Ethiopia which have a long record of violent instability it is not easy to be optimistic but for many others the picture is different.

In the short term the conduct of the first post-democratisation elections may be crucial and these pose particular problems especially for the new opposition parties. Even if the incumbent government does not try to manipulate the system to its advantage the new parties face a massive organisational problem. To organise a political party on a national basis, including in the rural areas, in a short time is extremely difficult. Ruling parties may not be particularly well organised but they do have obvious advantages stemming from their longer existence. Also, the tendency for the opposition to use their new freedoms to fragment into a large number of smaller parties has been apparent in several elections already. This proliferation of opposition parties plays into the hands of the better established ruling parties. The result of this is that incumbent parties may perform better than expected because of the divided opposition and this could cause damage to the credibility of the election. Both government and opposition parties have to learn to operate the new system and this includes learning to lose elections. The acceptance of defeat by ruling parties in Cape Verde and in Sao Tome and Principe might be regarded as a small positive sign.

It has to be remembered that the legalisation of opposition and the holding of competitive elections are only the vital first steps towards creating viable democratic political systems. The creation of a democratic political culture to underpin the new framework is a longer term enterprise which will face many difficulties. It is entirely possible that some, or many, political leaders will fail to adhere to norms like toleration of opposition and acceptance of public accountability, and will attempt to subvert the new democracies. This, after all, is what happened in many instances in the early post-independence period but to assume a repetition of past events would be to assume that nothing has been learned over the last thirty years. Even if the politicians operate according to the rules two further clouds darken the horizon of democracy in Africa. The first is the existence of the military as a potential threat to civilian rule although experience suggests that coups are less likely in functioning democracies than they are in authoritarian systems. The second is the problem of chronic economic underdevelopment which affects the majority of African states and which threatens the legitimacy of any type of political system. Whilst a greater political accountability might well diminish the corruption and inefficiency which has contributed to Africa's economic problems it offers no easy panacea.

In conclusion I would argue that a realistic prognosis does not have to be bleak. The widespread eagerness for democracy is impressive and although some democracies may perish and others will operate in imperfect ways it is unduly pessimistic to assume that the events of the last twelve to eighteen months will come to nothing. A cautious optimism regarding the future of democracy in Africa is in order.

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THE NATURE OF REGIONAL CONFLICT: A REVIEW OF 1990 — PART THREE: THE LEGACY OF SUPERPOWER COMPETITION

by Stephen Chan and Jonathan Aimer

THE detritus of the superpower conflict are those countries which no longer have a great strategic worth, and which have no neighbours willing or able to lend them assistance for development, but which contain an inner dynamic of self-destruction. The most tragic example is Cambodia, where the warring factions stand poised, perhaps on the brink of co-operation, but also of intensified conflict. No true predictions are possible here, but a parallel might be found in what happened in Angola in 1975, as the Alvor Agreement hammered out between the departing Portuguese authorities and the three African liberation movements broke down and plunged Angola into a civil war from which it has yet fully to emerge. Although the great powers involved in Cambodia, including China, are moving towards an acceptable path forward, in concert with the United Nations, the intransigence of the local parties and their armed nature suggest at least the possibility of any agreement failing to endure. In any case, the scars of war will linger in what was once a tranquil country.

In Korea, the situation is different in that both sides are considerably more industrialized than the Cambodians. Each side therefore has much to lose in full-scale conflict, and such conflict is unlikely. There is a mismatch of development, however, with the north in a no longer competitive mould of heavy industries, and the south in a more diversified and electronically-based economy which has already proved competitive internationally. So, although full-scale conflict is unlikely, there are no ready recipes for great co-operation either. The different styles of government, bitterly opposing ideologies, and a modern history of suspicion and mutual sabotage cannot easily be removed or even reduced. The peculiarities of their differences, created and reinforced so recently, suggests the continuation of an almost ritualistic inability to co-operate, despite increasing meetings and even moves towards integrated sports teams.

It would seem that the potential remains for forms of conflict within these countries, the lingering byproducts of different stages of the Cold War. However, precisely because their conflicts can be confined to themselves, they will gradually fade from the important international agendas.

Cambodia

The first day of 1990 saw violence in Cambodia, as the Sihanoukian National Army claimed to have destroyed four government tanks and to have killed 77 government soldiers. Violence continued throughout the year and it ended with news that China had supplied tanks to the Khmer Rouge.

Effectively, the Khmer Rouge dominated all considerations of Cambodia in 1990. They themselves demanded a role in any interim government and drove home their strength by token attacks on Phnom Penh, the first of which was reported as early as 9 January. The year closed again with news

of their capacities as they were thought, by November, to be able to surround or cut off Phnom Penh. Their numbers were greatly boosted in January, as 30,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas and their families returned from Thailand.

The UN sought to advance peace plans for the country, but these were alternately accepted then repudiated by various of the factions at war. In February, Viet Nam announced its support for the UN role and the Viet Namese-backed premier, Hun Sen, signed an agreement with Prince Sihanouk for a UN role in any settlement.

Viet Nam also admitted, however, that several thousand of its military advisers had returned to Cambodia. Their support of Hun Sen and the Chinese support of the Khmer Rouge maintained the long-standing nature of this regional conflict despite the attempted UN intervention. On 6 July, Sihanouk repudiated his accord with Hun Sen and backed Khmer Rouge plans for how the future of the country should be decided.

The lack of progress towards a negotiated settlement, the opportunism and volatility of the local actors, and the spectre of a further Khmer Rouge victory with the possibility of repeated slaughter on the killing fields of Cambodia prompted the US, on 18 July, to open talks with Viet Nam on ending the conflict. Although this might be read as an announcement of renewed US interest in the conflict, it was also a belated recognition, long after the Viet Nam war, that a Viet Namese Government existed, had regional interests, and that US policy and pride would not suffer if these were recognised. The action was as much a clearing up of the past as an interest in the future. For the US will not enforce any peace plan, and even the long-term agreement on one seems unlikely.

On 9 September, all parties accepted a peace plan at a meeting in Jakarta but, by year's end, disagreement continued to dog the peace effort. On the field the Khmer Rouge looked more ominous than ever, and the legacy of superpower conflict looked set to continue, without any effective US intervention or lastingly successful UN mediation.

Korea

As in Cambodia, talks promised much but led only a little way. Riots in South Korea marked the first half of 1990, led mainly by students, and culminating on 20 May in Kwangju City as students and residents commemorated the bloody suppression of the 1980 Kwangju uprising which had left 200 dead.

On 27 June, however, North Korea placed its support behind talks for reunification and, in the same month, South Korea conceded the principle that its citizens might travel to the north. By 24 July, however, both sides rejected the other's proposals for a limited opening of the border and, on 6 August, a bus carrying South Korean delegates for a meeting with North Koreans at Panmunjon was forcibly halted by riot police. This led to renewed rioting by students, protesting at the failure to open the border.

The meetings between North and South Korean officials have assumed a ritualistic quality, both sides promising a future of co-operation but neither wishing to sacrifice any advantage over the other. The students,

with a three-layer agenda of protest — against corruption, for a socialist government, and for reunification — have taken their own place in this ritual, and may be counted upon to protest often with great violence. The violence is unarmed, however, and precisely because it is thus containable, and the movements of all sides predictable, the superpowers have left the Koreans to themselves in 1990.

Cambodia

1. 1.90 Sihanoukian National Army destroys four T54 tanks and kills at least 77 government soldiers. Paris conference falls due to lack of consensus for inclusion of Khmer Rouge in talks Hun Sen claims Khmer Rouge have obtained US arms from non-communist coalition partners.
4. 1.90 USSR proposes total ban on weapon supplies to Cambodia and endorses Australian peace plan.
5. 1.90 Khmer Rouge demands role in interim government.
7. 1.90 Khmer Rouge launches attack on Battambang.
8. 1.90 Permanent members of Security Council agree to resume efforts towards negotiated settlement.
9. 1.90 Unconfirmed reports of Khmer Rouge attack on Phnom Penh.
12. 1.90 China and Cambodia agree to UN role in settlement.
15. 1.90 UN talks open in Paris. Khmer Rouge advance on Angor Wat.
16. 1.90 UN agrees to enhanced role for UN in settlement and interim UN government. Cambodian government accepts in principle a new peace plan which divides the country until free and fair elections can be held.
21. 1.90 30,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas and families return to Cambodia under pressure from Thai government.
24. 1.90 Sihanouk resigns as head of resistance coalition.
25. 1.90 Government claims to have removed rebels from Varin, north western Cambodia, which it claims to have captured on 18.1.90.
26. 1.90 Hun Sen proposes ceasefire, temporary division of Cambodia, UN interim government and National Council representatives from opposing parties to represent Cambodia and occupy UN seats.
5. 2.90 Sihanouk announces return from China to live in Cambodian border area.
11. 2.90 Two days of Security Council talks begin in New York.
16. 2.90 Vietnam announces support for UN role.
21. 2.90 Hun Sen and Sihanouk sign agreement for UN role in settlement.
23. 2.90 Vietnam admits that several thousand military advisers returned to Cambodia in late October. Government forces recapture strategic town in north west.
27. 2.90 Peace talks begin in Jakarta involving 3 coalition members, Cambodian government, Vietnam, Laos and six members of ASEAN.
31. 2.90 Talks broken off after failure to agree on UN role.
30. 3.90 Factional fighting within Khmer Rouge. 8 dead.
3. 4.90 Government troops recapture Thmar Puok.
6. 4.90 Rebels launch counter-offensive to regain land lost. Also take Sisophon.
6. 5.90 Khmer Rouge attacks two government artillery positions.
23. 5.90 Warring factions agree to hold a ceasefire soon.
26. 5.90 Security Council starts two days of talks in New York. Agreement on human rights, free elections and outside intervention.
1. 6.90 21 senior officers arrested for plotting coup against government.
4. 6.90 Khieu Samphan, leader of Khmer Rouge, boycotts start of talks in Tokyo.
5. 6.90 Conditional ceasefire signed by Hun Sen and Sihanouk and also a communique calling for establishment of supreme national council by the end of July.
USSR and Eastern Europe decide to stop sending economic aid to Cambodia.
18. 6.90 Rebels capture Kompong Thom, 80 miles from the capital, but withdraw after four hours.
21. 6.90 Coup plot discovered.
1. 7.90 Khmer Rouge cuts all roads linking Phnom Penh with the north west and west, denying the city food.
6. 7.90 Sihanouk renounces accord signed with Hun Sen in June to back Khmer

Rouge plan.

13. 7.90 Khmer Rouge attacks train to Phnom Penh from Kompong. 26 dead and 52 wounded.

18. 7.90 US to withdraw diplomatic recognition of coalition and open talks with Vietnam on ending the conflict.

31. 7.90 Khmer Rouge claims to have retaken the port of Kampot, south east of Phnom Penh. 19 government troops killed and 45 wounded.

3. 8.90 Khmer Rouge agrees to formation of supreme national council as part of peace settlement.

16. 8.90 Khmer Rouge attacks train from Battambang to Phnom Penh. 53 killed and 100 wounded.

26. 8.90 Rebels repulse government offensive on Sisophon.

28. 8.90 Security Council agrees on peace plan involving ceasefire, disarmament, temporary UN adminstration and free elections.

29. 8.90 Coalition accepts peace plan.

2. 9.90 Coalition and government agree to meet to discuss peace plan.

7. 9.90 Vietnam accepts peace plan.

9. 9.90 Talks open in Jakarta. All parties agree to peace plan.

10. 9.90 Agreement reached on power-sharing, formation and composition of temporary leadership.

18. 9.90 First meeting of Supreme National Council, but failure to agree on delegation representatives for UN General Assembly and chairmanship of SNC.

21. 9.90 Sihanouk offers government an extra seat on council if he is given chairmanship.

24. 9.90 Hun Sen accepts offer and talks resume.

8.10.90 Revealed that MI6 is giving military aid to Khmer Rouge, especially mine technology.

9.10.90 Khmer Rouge equipped with 24 tanks. Peace efforts fail due to lack of agreement on a role for Sihanouk. Agreement by permanent members of the Security Council on a framework for conflict settlement.

16.10.90 General Assembly urges warring factions to consider Security Council peace plan.
General Assembly decides to fill Cambodia's UN seat with a Cambodian National Council representative as opposed to representatives of the rebel groups.

21.10.90 50 killed in Khmer Rouge attack on train in the Kampot region on 17.10.90.

22.10.90 A recent defector from the Khmer Rouge says the sort of attack mentioned above is termed 'oxidising iron' — 'spreading dust across the enemy's infrastructure'.

25.10.90 House and Senate agreed on 23.10.90 to end secret non-military aid by CIA to anti-communist rebels.

27.10.90 British government tacitly admits that SAS has been training anti-government factions.

30.10.90 Prime Minister Chatichai Choonavan of Thailand and Nguyen Co Thach, Vietnam's Foreign Minister, say they can do nothing more to bring peace. Khmer Rouge claims to have taken the town of Svay Sen in the Siem Reap province.

1.11.90 Campaigning under way for elections in Cambodia which will take place when peace returns. New political parties being formed in refugee camps.

9.11.90 Diplomats from 12 countries start detailed talks on UN peace plans in Jakarta.

20.11.90 Sihanouk agreed to accept Hun Sen as Deputy Chairman of the country's Supreme National Council, with Son Sann, leader of the KPNLF, as third in command.

23.11.90 China announced that it had stopped supplying the Khmer Rouge. Representatives from five permanent members of the Security Council, Indonesia and the UN meet for two days in Paris.

26.11.90 Agreement reached in Paris for final draft of peace settlement.

27.11.90 Hun Sen rejects the idea that government of the country should be passed to UN peacekeeping forces, as outlined in the peace settlement.

10.12.90 Reports that the Khmer Rouge has infiltrated Phnom Penh to undermine the government from within.

21.12.90 Talks in Paris on UN peace plan open with rebel groups and the Cam-

bodian government present.
22.12.90 Hun Sen faints during the opening session of the talks and is admitted to hospital.
24.12.90 Close to agreement in Paris as talks end.
26.12.90 Fighting resumed on 25.12.90.
29.12.90 China reported to be still arming the Khmer Rouge.
31.12.90 Khmer Rouge claims to have recaptured Svay Len on 23.12.90 and repulsed a counter attack.

Korea
2. 1.90 Kim Il Sung calls for DMZ wall to be removed.
7. 1.90 US intelligence suggests North Korea is seeking nuclear weapons capability.
5. 2.90 Two South Korean students imprisoned for unauthorized visit to North Korea.
21. 2.90 North Korean invasion tunnels unearthed.
28. 2.90 71st anniversary of revolt against Japanese occupation. South Korea announces release of 1,111 political prisoners.
13. 4.90 1,800 students clash with police in two incidents. Demand removal of US troops.
9. 5.90 10,000 South Korean students stage anti-government protest. 900 arrested.
16. 5.90 Thousands of students riot in South Korean cities.
20. 5.90 10,000 dissidents clash with police in Kwangju, a south western city. Third day of 10 day commemoration of 1980 Kwangju uprising which led to 200 deaths.
24. 5.90 Kim Il Sung re-elected on re-opening of Supreme People's Assembly.
27. 6.90 North Korea agrees to talks on re-unification.
22. 7.90 South Korea announces it may allow dissidents to travel to North for political rallies.
23. 7.90 All 80 opposition members of South Korea's National Assembly resign to support fresh calls for general elections.
24. 7.90 North and South Korea reject each other's proposals for a limited opening of the border.
6. 8.90 150 riot police stop a bus carrying 12 delegates from going to Panmunjon to talk to North Koreans.
15. 8.90 Thousands of students clash with police in Seoul after failure to open border.
22. 8.90 South Korean police arrest 48 for attempting to topple the government and create a socialist state.
4. 9.90 Prime Ministers of two Koreas meet at Peace House, Panmunjon.
6. 9.90 Agree to meet again on 15 October in Pyongyang.
1.10.90 USSR and South Korea set up diplomatic ties.
2.10.90 Roh Tae Woo says the above would encourage the reunification of the two Koreas.
6.10.90 North Korea condemns USSR for re-establishing diplomatic links.
9.10.90 Kim Dae Jung, opposition leader, starts hunger strike.
11.10.90 1,000 police in South Korea stormed the University in Seoul on 10.10.90 to stop a North Korean film from being shown.
16.10.90 Senior South Korean delegation to visit North for negotiations on improving relations.
19.10.90 Failure to reach agreement on ways to reduce tension.
31.10.90 40 arrested — said to be leaders of a 'socialist plot' against the South Korean government.
19.11.90 Asiawatch, US human rights group, claims human rights violations are continuing in South Korea.
12.12.90 Yon Hyong Muk and Kang Young Hoon, Prime Ministers of North and South Korea respectively, met for third round of talks on 11.12.90.
13.12.90 Roh Tae Woo to become first leader of South Korea to visit the USSR. Talks to be held on investment and trade.
14.12.90 Little gained as talks between the two prime ministers ended.
17.12.90 Soviets apologize for shooting down KAL airliner on 1.9.83.
21.12.90 South Korea expecting a record trade deficit of $7bn in 1990.
27.12.90 South Korean Agency for National Security Planning arrests 31 under anti-communist laws on charges of 'socialist conspiracy'.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: WHERE THE STONE AGE MEETS THE SPACE AGE

by Martin C. Needler

THE discovery by the outside, 'white', world of the highlands peoples of New Guinea is so recent that movies exist of the first contact, of the astonished expressions on the faces of the Stone Age warriors confronting the strange pale humans who have just emerged from the belly of the huge silver bird.

The Papua New Guinea tribes have had, willy-nilly, to reach some kind of accommodation to the world of those strangers. Participants in that first encounter are on videotape, forty years later, telling in pidgin English — the newly independent country's lingua franca — what they recall of their reactions to those first Australian arrivals.

Some have adjusted well. We gave a lift in our jeep to the desk clerk of our hotel at Mount Hagen, who needed to go to the hospital to get a dressing changed, but we were delayed by one of the adventures that fall frequently to the lot of the traveller in the highlands. 'Better take me back,' the clerk said, looking at his watch. 'That white fellow' (referring to the young Australian who was nominally the hotel manager, presumably to reassure travellers they were in civilized hands) 'does not know how to operate the computer.'

Although the Australian presence is substantial on this, its neighbouring island to the north (which is in fact larger than any other island except Greenland and Australia itself), and the Australians were the mandatory power in PNG until independence in 1975, there are survivals of other outside rulers. Papua New Guinea is the name of the eastern half of the island. The western half was a Dutch possession until, because of the cowardice and cynicism of the United Nations in the face of Sukarno's bullying, it was turned over to the Indonesians. They have colonized it as 'Irian Jaya,' occupying its lands and abusing its people, despite a growing resistance movement. Before the Australians took over the mandate from the new League of Nations following Germany's defeat in 1919, the northern part of the eastern half was German New Guinea, the southern part British-ruled Papua — hence the compound name of the present-day country — and traces of the German presence remain.

Mount Hagen is the central town in the northern highlands and I was not surprised by the German-accented English of Norbert, the travel agent with whom I arranged, by phone, our tour of the highlands. I scanned the airport waiting room in vain for the German who was to meet our arriving plane, however, and was taken aback when a small black man with bushy hair and red teeth from chewing betel nut came forward and — with his German accent intact — introduced himself. The highlanders around Mount Hagen have a distinctive physiognomy, with high foreheads, curving noses, and jutting chins (the late Ethiopian emperor, Haile Selassie, would have passed unnoticed in the highlands) and Norbert looked exactly like half

a dozen porters, loafers, and casual onlookers hanging around the airport, except that they were dressed more informally, in the traditional highland manner, in a belt with a cluster of leaves tucked strategically fore and aft, while he wore a shirt and jeans.

The adventure in question had to do with a case involving the litigation which appears continuous among PNG tribes people. Like hill tribes elsewhere, lacking an effective judicial system, the basic technique for keeping the peace as much as possible, and assuring justice when peace is not kept, is retribution. In PNG, tribal groupings are known as 'wontoks' in pidgin, since they share 'one talk', not a common thing when perhaps three million people, scattered through thousands of mountain valleys over an area of 150,000 square miles, speak over 700 languages. If someone is killed, it is in principle incumbent on members of his wontok to kill one person from the wontok of the guilty party, to set things right and deter similar acts in the future. However, a lesser penalty, such as compensation, can be negotiated, especially when the killing was accidental. With cars and buses now careering around highland roads, deaths are not uncommon and negotiations accordingly frequent and protracted.

Of course, negotiations are not always successful. One Australian lady told us of rounding a bend on a lonely mountain road to find her jeep's way blocked by a tree trunk. A warrior in full warpaint and feathers raced down the hill, looked at her, laid down his spear, and started to remove the roadblock. 'I'm sorry I inconvenienced you,' he told her in perfect English. 'I was just waiting here to kill somebody.' There is much speculation among foreigners as to whether tribesmen regard all whites, or all foreigners, as belonging to a single wontok or whether they made national distinctions. A Ghanaian professor at the university in Port Moresby told us that he believed his colour made no difference; he was regarded as just another foreigner.

To an outsider it seems that the tribes people live eventful lives, in which special occasions abound. In the course of two days' drive through the highlands we came across a funeral, a wedding, a ground-breaking ceremony, markets, and preparations for a war and a feast. In fact, both of the latter were connected with funerals, which play a major role in the highlands. Over a thousand guests were expected at one funeral, which meant a massive slaughter of pigs, effected with much glee and no regard for humane considerations whatever. Another funeral entailed the turnout of all able-bodied tribesmen with weapons and in full warpaint, just in case the wontok responsible for the death proved unreasonable in the compensation negotiated — indeed, to encourage them not to prove unreasonable. This was explained to us after we had passed the field in which the warriors were massing and my wife raised her camera to take a picture. A warrior with upraised spear raced towards her and she let the camera drop, whereupon he stopped and lowered his spear. When she raised the camera again — for she is a fanatic in these matters — he again raised his spear, and she realized he was not objecting to having his photo taken, but posing for it.

The wedding resembled no other we had seen. Members of the two families — perhaps a hundred in each — sat on either side of a field listening to a series of orators. The bride, sitting amidst her family, did indeed giggle more than the other girls, but she wore her everyday jeans, dirty T-shirt, and bowling jacket. The speakers, we were told, dwelled on the virtues of the bride and her skills in household occupations, and also on her mother's care in raising her, the cue for members of the groom's family to approach the bride's mother and make her gifts of small amounts of money. A great deal of effort was expended in specifying and describing the items included in the bride-price. This was the equivalent of about US $23,000, half in cash (the PNG currency unit is worth slightly more than the dollar) and about half in pigs at about $500 each, the actual two dozen pigs involved being tied to stakes to one side of the field, their squealing and grunting creating a counterpoint to the speeches and the general murmur of conversation; plus one cassowarie, the flightless bird whose feathers are much valued as personal adornment.

The point of being careful and specific ('We note that six of the pigs are undersized and worth perhaps no more than $300 each') is that a return gift is to be made by the bride's family after a week or so of about 20% of the value of the bride-price, and they wanted to avoid recriminations about the adequacy of the gift.

The price of a bride varies, of course, in relation to her looks and skills. After studying my light-skinned, red-haired wife with interest for a time, a local man asked me in pidgin how much I had paid for her. He seemed satisfied with my considered reply, that in my country you didn't pay for a bride all at once, but continuously over the years, and I couldn't tell what the total was because I was still paying.

Feathers, in fact, are the Papuans' equivalent of jewellery. One man told us his annual expense for feathers for his family was between two and three thousand dollars. In our odyssey through the highlands, we came across groups of young girls leaving their houses in full party dress-skirts, feather anklets, bracelets and headdress, noses painted red, and cuzcuz-fur boas, draped so as not to cover the breasts. Many were also carrying cleft sticks with paper money held in the fork. We followed them to an open field, where they formed a sort of chorus line, chanting in a somewhat desultory fashion, breaking off intermittently to giggle, as the line pivoted.

In front of a small forest of money-sticks, a distinguished looking older man was making what seemed to us an impressive speech, although the bystanders who could understand it appeared to give it less than full attention. Our driver found someone who he could speak to in pidgin and returned to tell us that we were present at the ground-breaking ceremony for a Lutheran church.

The Lutherans don't have things their own way, though. The Catholic presence is strong — we attended a mass after which the German prelate preached in fluent pidgin — attested to by the ubiquity of souvenir T-shirts from the Pope's 1984 visit to Mount Hagen, bearing John Paul's likeness and the legend in pidgin 'Mi lukim Pop' — 'I saw the Pope'.

P,5439

We would guess that the theological views of the congregation of the new Lutheran church will not be altogether orthodox. Papuans take religion in general seriously but try to reconcile it with traditional beliefs. These beliefs may not provide an adequate framework for understanding the modern world which has superimposed itself so abruptly. There is a substantial crime problem in Port Moresby — only to be expected perhaps, when poor country people flock to the city only to find that the jobs are not available that would give them the money necessary to buy the miraculous artifacts of civilization. Robberies are accompanied by rape, beatings, and other behaviour characteristic of inter-tribal revenge warfare, which has provoked the speculation that there may be a cargo cult aspect to urban crime. The premise of the cargo cults is that the gadgets and appliances of the West are clearly not fabricated of any materials, or by any methods, known to man. They must therefore be gifts of the ancestors in heaven. However, Papuans also have ancestors in heaven. Why have they not provided these goods? In the classic Pacific cargo cults the answer given is that these goods arrive in large silver birds that need specially prepared landing strips. The islanders accordingly prepare airstrips and sit down to wait for the cargo to arrive. In the urban PNG version, the reasoning comes to rest with the conclusion that whites have found some trick to divert and monopolize cargo sent by the Papuans' ancestors and meant for them — a kind of Stone Age Marxism.

Others reject this interpretation. When my wife asked a Papuan travel agent, with some trepidation, whether it was true that the locals committed a great many rapes against Western women, he became indignant and denounced the charge as baseless racist prejudice. 'That's not true at all,' he assured her. 'Why, they rape the local women just as much,' which she seemed, for some reason, to find less than reassuring.

In fact, the practices of the Papuans seem altogether consistent with capitalism — the careful calculations, the materialism, the lively sense of self-interest. We pass along the story we were told of the tribe, paid two million dollars for the land on which a dam and electricity-generating station were built, which later decided that three million would have been a more appropriate sum, and made its views known to the state electric company. 'A deal is a deal,' they were told. 'You agreed to two million.' But the tribal negotiators had an effective rejoinder. 'Look,' they told the company, 'you have staff manning the dam and the power station, we have spears and poison arrows. We think three million would be fair.' The company reconsidered and did indeed agree to pay the additional million.

Which suggests that sometimes the Stone Age can hold its own against the Space Age.

STILL THE GULF CRISIS

by Leo Murray

THE aftermath of the Gulf Crisis has shown that the success of the 'blitzkrieg' of the Western Allies against the Iraqi Army has only had the limited success of ending the occupation of Kuwait. The 'New World Order' announced by President Bush has been forgotten and the Arab Alliance in support of the US/UK effort has not worked. The UN role is a carefully limited one with the UN Secretary-General conscious all the time of the fact that the majority of his members, including veto-holding China and the Soviet Union, remain instinctively suspicious of the Western powers, their former 'Imperialist' masters. Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar himself revealed casually in a conversation with an Arab delegate that being Hispanic his sympathies were with the Arabs.

On the Western side there are psychological twists too. Bob Woodward, the man who disclosed Watergate and thus prepared the ground for Richard Nixon's downfall, has just written another revealing book, *The Commanders*, about the background of the Gulf War. He describes in detail how decisions are made in the Bush White House. General Powell, he reveals, strongly favoured 'containment' instead of the offensive and General Schwarzkopf had argued with the President that it would take eight to twelve months to be ready for an offensive. Secretary Baker was for raising the hostage issue.

This explains the need for the specific UN Resolution and President Bush going 'the extra mile for peace'. It was Bush himself, supported strongly by Security Adviser Air Force General Scowcroft, who took the decision to fight. It was also his personal decision not to advance to Baghdad and finish Saddam. He stressed the curious Vietnam comparison in order to explain stopping the advance. It is a curious comparison. Vietnam borders on China and could import all the Soviet and Chinese arms and supplies it needed. Even Kissinger's bombing of Cambodia failed to stop it. Iraq's rear borders are with Turkey and Iran. And the Kremlin, desperate for Western economic aid, had stopped supplies by air. The argument of President Bush showed dramatically, and crucially, that the trauma of the defeat in Vietnam was still there in the President's sub-conscious.

President Bush's heart trouble proves his deep personal involvement in the Gulf crisis. This intensified his style of work and life described by some insiders as 'frenetic'. He is now under constant recorded electronic control. The American public has been informed lately of the actual state of health of past Presidents like Roosevelt and Kennedy, successfully kept secret at the time. One can now detect that President Bush has had to slow down and cut his workload. His advisers in the White House and in the Republican Party have now become very conscious of the personal risks involved in him getting entangled in tense international issues. Secretary Baker's sorties into the Middle East to settle the Arab-Israeli issue were started

before President Bush had his heart trouble. It is quite obvious now that the President's advisers want to avoid, at all costs, serious health trouble that would in every way affect the choice of a candidate for next year's Presidential election. Vice-President Quayle has aggresively presented question marks against him and only lately have his supporters started a defence campaign.

The constant personal tension President Bush had to bear can be better understood when it is realized that, under Saudi influence, it was decided not to send rockets and anti-tank weapons to the Shia rebels in the South who proved a greater danger to Saddam than the Kurds. The Saudis are reported to have expected that senior officers of Saddam's own Takriti clan would remove Saddam and a sound authoritarian Sunni regime would ensure the present borders of Iraq.

But in political terms Saddam has saved a great deal. He has, for the time being, eliminated Kuwait as an oil producer, and therefore competitor when sanctions are relaxed. Nobody can tell when the 600 Kuwaiti oil wells will function again. He is successfully dealing with the Kurds and Shias but in different ways. The Kurds, disappointed by the US decision not to take Baghdad, think that a deal with the Saddam regime will enable them to survive for the next trial of strength. They know that neither the Turks nor the Iranians are friendly disposed.

The last meeting of the Arab League Council in Cairo was a great success for the Saddam regime. Its delegate could argue aggressively with the Kuwaiti envoy. Saddam had invaded, annexed Kuwait, a fellow member, and destroyed its economy but Iraq remains a full member, when 18 years ago Egypt was expelled for making peace with Israel.

The White House, supported by Downing Street, had encouraged the so called Two Plus Four agreement for the defence of the Gulf; by the UAE, the Gulf Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt and Syria. The Egyptian and Syrian contingents, 38,000 and 20,000 men respectively sent to the Gulf War, would stay to ensure security. But President Mubarak abruptly announced in May that his troops would be withdrawn. One reason hinted at was the reluctance of the oil states to grant financial support. Another is the embarrassing fact that both Mr. Bush and Mr. Major have stated repeatedly that Saddam Hussein must go, that sanctions will continue as long as he remains in power. In diplomatic history such public statements are almost without precedent. At the same time the US Command has decided to keep arcund 3,000 men in Kuwait at least until the autumn, a safeguard.

Saddam Hussein has been playing his own game to re-establish himself. He has been negotiating with the UN for months. He is reported to have told the International Atomic Energy Authority that he will not disclose the location of low key items including stocks of enriched uranium suitable for making nuclear bombs unless there is a guarantee that they will remain where they are. Again, the setting up a UN Fund, controlled by the Security Council, for receiving a percentage of Iraq's future oil revenues for compensation of victims of the Gulf War suggests that Saddam's demand for

the lifting of sanctions is likely to be met sooner rather than later.

While wearing down the UN in negotiating the practical and essential details of the provisions Iraq accepted when hostilities were ended, Saddam is setting up an ingeniously balanced structure of democracy and a multi-party system while at the same time preserving the ever present Secret Police and the crack units of the Republican Guards he had chosen not to risk in the war. Saddam has based his strategy of survival on his assessment that the US-led coalition against him that drove him out of Kuwait is noticeably disintegrating and that no majority in the UN for new effective measures against an Iraq, that is blandly, and sometimes vociferously, by-passing obligations entered into, will be found and that sanctions will wither away.

The present outcome of the efforts of President Bush and Secretary Baker, supported by Mr. Hurd and the Soviet Foreign Minister, to get a real move going in the Israeli-Arab dispute must be seen against the successful survival of the Saddam Hussein regime. Saddam's Iraq remains a major factor of uncertainty. This applies both to Assad's Syria and to Israel. Both countries have profited from the Gulf War. Syria has been allowed a free hand in Lebanon, the crucially important disarmament of the Christian Militia, for example, while both the PLO and the Shia pro-Iranian Hezbollah who hold the Western hostages, were allowed to keep their arms. Assad of Syria has to look behind his back to Saddam to be certain that he does not lose out in his effort to be the recognised leader of hard-line Arab nationalism. He therefore refused Secretary Baker's frantic attempts to get an Arab-Israeli conference. Israeli Premier Shamir could afford resistance too. In the first place the Arab side was implying in the talks too many sweeping concessions on the ground, the essence of their 'land for peace' formula, in exchange merely for a conference. Secondly, there was Syria's insistence of having the UN there which the Israelis regard as a hostile organization. There is the impression that the Arabs want all before giving nothing. That may be wrong but the fact that the Arab League recently added 120 Western firms to their boycott list for trading with Israel right in the middle of Baker's trips did not help either. And then there are next year's Presidential elections in the US, of course.

The Americans still intend to turn the Gulf Co-operation Council of the Gulf oil states into a real and effective international body that could control events. In order to strengthen the efforts of that fairly relaxed body, the US and Britain want to maintain substantial stocks of arms and equipment in Saudi Arabia and some of the Gulf States like Bahrain. But the Saudis are not too keen now. Patient efforts to set up a regional development bank on the Luxembourg European Investment Bank model are also not progressing. It appears that all the players in the Middle East are returning to play their old role. The EEC proposal to set up a Middle East conference on Security and Co-operation — and the European Community's sympathy for the Arab cause, especially its Southern members, is known — have met with no real response.

The other 'super-power', the Soviet Union, has also suffered in status and prestige in the Gulf War and the continuing Gulf Crisis. In the first place in the war itself American and British arms, planes and, above all, electronic equipment without which no major action can be fought nowadays, have proved conspicuously superior. This must be kept in mind when evaluating the prestige President Gorbachev lost when President Bush turned down his last minute effort to prevent Western military action in which he refused to take part. The visit to Israel and to some Arab states by Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh also underlined the supportive and essentially minor role the Soviet Union has been forced to play in the Middle East.

This again must be seen against the continuing structural crisis in the Soviet Union. All Middle Eastern countries are aware of the fact that President Gorbachev has straightforwardly appealed for Western economic aid in the crisis he faces, like any Third World leader. And again the Soviet crisis has gone well beyond personalities. Real structural changes have taken place. In various Republics key industrial enterprises, like coal mines, have been passed from the control of the central Soviet government to that of the Republics in which they are located. Individual Republics now have obtained the right to claim for themselves percentages of the foreign currency earnings of the enterprises they now control. Above all, Communist Party offices established until now in every state enterprise, like mines had to be closed. They controlled management and workforce. Communist Party power is disintegrating.

Again, Soviet Republics bordering on the Middle East, like Azerbaidjan, Georgia and Armenia, have established independent trade relations with their neighbours like Turkey and Iran. This is significant because it shows that these two neighbours of Iraq have begun to play their own traditional roles. Turkey is acting independently of its fellow members of NATO, especially, the US, as is shown in the difficulties that have arisen due to involvement of the Western armed forces in the 'Safe Haven' developments. It did not help that the US and Britain had asked for financial aid from the Gulf states, Germany and Japan repeatedly. It gave the Turks the feeling that they could now act more freely in their own interests, blandly ignoring the objections of their senior allies.

The outcome of the Gulf crisis has also strengthened the international position of the most noticed contributors to the cost of the Gulf War, Germany and Japan. The most significant illustration of this is German Chancellor Kohl's message to President Bush, a warning almost, that his government is determined to bring about a United States of Europe by the next century.

Japan, again, has felt strong and secure enough to turn down President Gorbachev's appeal for financial aid and is steadily pursuing a policy of friendship with the Gulf states, as independent as present circumstances allow, from its relations with the US and the EEC.

The Gulf War, indeed continues to produce unexpected results, like every international conflict. It has significantly down-graded the superpowers.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF CRIME

by L. F. Lowenstein

FOLLOWING the hard line of the past with very strict sentences being imposed for offences, during the latter part of the 20th century there has been a more humanitarian approach to prisoners who have offended against the rules of society. It must be said that in recent years, there has been a reaction to this relatively 'soft approach' to dealing with offenders against persons and property and for other acts of criminality. This is a natural phenomenon of a pendulum swinging from one extreme to another. The general public have suffered from the repercussions of more soft or humanitarian approaches to dealing with offenders, and have noted that in many cases, this has not deterred them from committing further acts of anti-social behaviour. It has also been increasingly noticed that prisons do not cure the behaviour of criminals as such, and the dilemma has been finding an alternative which is more effective as far as the criminal behaviour is concerned, as well as cost effective. Internationally, the cost of dealing with acts of criminality must run into billions of whatever currency one might like to name. Criminologists, psychologists and sociologists as well as many other theoreticians and practitioners disagree in many ways on how best to deal with what appears to be the rising frequency of criminal activities in a world that is becoming smaller, more technological and increasingly less dependent on traditional morals and religions.

There has been some recent research into seeking to understand why criminal behaviour might well be seen as 'obsessive compulsive' and why prisons fail to deal with it. Discussion includes the perennial question of what causes criminal activities and what portion may be attributable to genetic and environment factors and also some research and views on how best to deal with the criminal through diagnosis and treatment of his problems.

1. The Problem of Criminality and why Prisons Fail

Perhaps one of greatest concerns in recent years is the rise of violent crimes against persons. Links between such behaviour and mental illness or derangement are uncertain. Certainly the judicial system in many countries deals with criminal acts as if mental or psychological problems were non-existent or irrelevant to such behaviour. This is understandable since to consider mental illness or mental instability complicates the sentencing process. Black or white thinking rather than considering the shades in-between is therefore still the prerogative of most law givers and law upholders.

Protter & Travin (1982) examined 268 criminal offenders, predominantly 16-30 years of age with previous psychiatric histories (mostly typically drug or alcohol abuse) who had been convicted of violent crimes. 27% were diagnosed as having major paranoid, schizoid or borderline problems

or suffered from minor passive-aggressive, hysterical or obsessive-compulsive personality disorders. In many cases, such evidence was ignored and the result was naturally to show no concern for such psychological problems and to incarcerate until the sentence was completed, following which the non-rehabilitated criminal was released.

The families of habitual criminals who have been imprisoned at least twice were studied by Juras (1986), in a Polish study. He examined how general education and professional training determined the family situation of the 103 habitual criminals. A significant dependence was found between professional training of these families in education and the marital status of such criminals and the frequency of criminal behaviour of these offenders. Lowenstein (1987) studied the behaviour of a thief who had stolen hundreds of cars and noted the high degree of obsessive compulsive components of such activities which hindered any attempt at rehabilitation by merely imprisoning the thief on a number of occasions.

Individuals with mental retardation are especially at risk in the current climate of a criminal justice system. McAfee & Gural (1988) surveyed 46 attorney-generals of the states and territories of the United States concerning the treatment of persons with mental retardation accused of a crime. The subjects were asked to provide information in three areas: identification, protection before/during trial, and protections and services after conviction and during imprisonment. The responses indicated that, with a few exceptions, identification of persons with mental retardation in criminal justice was neither systematic nor probable. There appeared to be somewhat more protection although that was limited also in the statutes pertaining to mental illness rather than mental retardation. It was concluded that the criminal justice system appeared to have adopted an informal, inconsistent, and inequitable response to the problems of the individuals with mental retardation who were accused of a crime.

2. Causes with Some Genetic Input Related to Criminality

The importance of genetics in causing or being associated with criminality has had a long history. Bohman *et al* (1982) studied the inheritance of criminality in 862, 23-43 year old Swedish males adopted by non-relatives at an early age. The type of offence and association appeared to be largely non-familial. Nevertheless, different genetic and environmental antecedents influenced the development of criminality, depending on whether or not there was associated alcohol abuse. Alcoholic criminals often committed repetitive violent offences whereas non-alcoholic criminals were characterised by the commission of a small number of petty property offences. These non-alcoholic petty criminals had an excess of biologic parents with histories of petty crime but not alcohol abuse. In contrast, the risks of criminality in alcohol users was correlated with the severity of their own alcohol abuse, but not with criminality in the biologic or adoptive parents. Unstable pre-adoptive placement was associated with increased risk for petty criminality, whereas low social status was associated with alcohol related criminality.

A further study by Cloninger *et al* (1982) studied the interaction of

congenital and postnatal antecedents of criminality in 862, 23-43 year old Swedish males adopted at an early age by non-relatives. Most of the explained variability was due to differences between genetic predispositions of subjects but substantial contributions were also made by postnatal environments, either alone or in combination with specific genetic subtypes.

There was no overlap between the congenital antecedents of alcoholism and non-alcoholic criminality but some post-natal variables were common to criminality and a type of alcoholism that was limited to expression in males. Low social status alone was not sufficient to lead to criminality, but did increase risk in combination with specific types of genetic predispositions. Unstable and pre-adoptive placements contributed to the risks of both petty criminality and male limited alcoholism, but not to other types of alcohol abuse.

The association of genetics and criminality was also studied by Ellis (1982). He reviewed the research concerning the relationship between genetics and criminality in terms of four classes of research designs: general pedigree (or family), twin, karyotype (chromosome set or constitution), and adoption studies. Only the latter three offered etiological hypotheses, and of these only one type of karyotype study and the adoption studies offered definitive evidence. Among the fairly definitive types of studies, most of the evidence supported the proposition that human variations in the tendency to commit criminal behaviour was significantly affected by some genetic factors.

The genetic correlates of criminal behaviour were also considered by Gabrielli & Mednick (1983). They investigated 6,129 non-familial adoptions of males that occurred in a small European country between 1927 and 1947 for information concerning biological and adoptive parents and criminality. It was hypothesised that a relationship was found between registered criminality in the biological parents and registered criminality in the adoptees. The results provided a strong case for the possibility that some of the individual differences that made it more likely for one person to be criminal than another was heritable: the presence of criminality in the adoptive parents slightly (but not significantly) increased the risk of criminality in the adoptee sons but if either of the biological parents had been convicted for criminality, the risk for criminality in the adoptee sons increased significantly.

A study of females in relation to criminality was carried out by Bohman *et al* (1984). These investigators obtained data on criminality, alcohol abuse and medical history from 859 adopted Swedish females born between 1930 and 1949 and their adoptive and biological parents, to determine whether there was an excess of somatoform (bodily) disorders (high frequency and diversiform) in subjects with biological parents who exhibited alcoholism and criminality. The results showed that both types of somatoform disorders had substantial genetic and environmental antecedents and that the antecedents of each type were different, suggesting that high frequency and diversiform bodily problems were discreet disease entities.

Other genetic influences were studied in relation to criminal convictions

by Mednick *et al* (1984). They compared court convictions of 14,427 adoptees (between 1927 and 1947) in a small northern European nation with those of their biological and adoptive parents. The results showed a significant relationship between biological parents, criminal convictions and criminal convictions in their adopted children. No evidence was found that type of crime of biological parents was related to type of adoptee crime. There was no significant statistical correlation between adoptee and adoptive parent court convictions. Siblings adopted separately into different homes tended to be concordant for convictions, especially if the shared biological father also had a record of criminal behaviour. It was concluded that some factor transmitted by criminal parents increased the likelihood that their children would engage in criminal behaviour and that biological pre-dispositions were involved in the etiology of at least some criminal behaviour.

Rushton, Russell & Wells (1985) present a genetic similarity theory. They seek to show that personality traits exist, are longitudinally stable, can be assessed by several converging indices, are inherited and have adaptive significance. Data on the inheritance of individual differences in activity level, aggression, altruism, chronogenetics, criminality, dominance, emotionality, intelligence, locus of control, political attitudes, sexuality, sociability, values and vocational interests are reviewed. Ways in which the personality traits could arise in accordance with established genetic principles are suggested. The genetic similarity theory (GST) which states that a gene may ensure its own survival by acting to bring about the reproduction of any organism in which copies of itself are to be found. An organism may have a tendency to exhibit favouritism towards genetically similar strangers as well as towards its own relatives. The genetic similarity theory is applied to several data sets including kin recognition studies in animals, assortative mating, intrafamilial relations, human friendship and altruism and ethnic nepotism.

The extent of genetic relations in criminal convictions and psychiatric hospital diagnoses was studied by Baker (1986). He applied a biometrical model-fitting approach, using generalised least-squares estimates obtained for parameters of additive polygenic and environmental influences on criminal convictions and psychiatric diagnoses in 2,532 Danish male adoptees (aged 29-59 years) and their family members. Significant heritable influences were found for property crime and for a composite psychiatric variable pertaining to hospital admissions for alcohol abuse, drug abuse, and personality disorders. Both correlated environmental factors and correlated genetic factors important to the different variables accounted for the observed phenotypic (or physical in contrast to the genotype) relationship between property crime and these anti-social disorders. No cultural transmission was present for the adoptees' anti-social disorders, although significant paternal cultural transmission was found for property crimes. Patterns of assortative mating differed for the biological versus adoptive parents, and selective placement was negligible.

A later study by Baker, Mack, Moffitt & Mednick (1989) studied sex

differences in genetic and environmental influences on criminal behaviour against property in 6,129 male and 7,065 female Danish adoptees (aged 29-52 years) and their biological and adoptive parents. Estimates of heritability and environmental influences were compared in both sexes. However, the risk of criminal convictions was greater for biological children of criminal women than criminal men, suggesting a genetic predisposition. There were no greater risks for either sex in terms of familial environment as measured by adoptive-parent criminality and socio-economic status. It was suggested that a woman must have a more severe genetic predisposition and more adverse environmental influences than a man to engage in criminal behaviour.

3. Causes Predominantly Environmental Leading to Criminality

The replies by those who tend to denigrate or minimise the impact of genetics on criminality are similar to those of Humphrey (1984). He reviewed the report by S. A. Mednick, mentioned earlier, that examined court conviction rates of more than 14,000 people adopted between 1927 and 1947 and compared the adoptees' conviction rates and those of their biological parents and their adoptive parents. The main finding was that the male adoptees' genetic fathers' conviction rate had more predictive value than that of their adoptive fathers. The present author noted that, although the article shows that genetic factors were not to be dismissed, he wished to emphasise that no adoptee, whatever his or her ancestry, may for that reason necessarily be doomed by his or her genes.

An examination by Clerget-Darpoux, Goldin & Gershon (1986) found that selective placement or other bias existed in adoption studies of psychiatric illness, criminal behaviour and intelligence. This possible bias was examined quantitatively and it was shown that a genetic effect can be simulated. Existence of a genetic effect that was independent of environmental correlation was to be accepted when the frequency of a disease in adoptees, who had a biological parent affected and no adoptive parents affected, was significantly greater than the frequency of the disease in adoptees who had an adopted parent affected and no biological parents affected. The published data on schizophrenia, alcoholism and criminality did not exclude the possibility of undetected environmental correlations simulating a genetic effect, according to this direct criteria.

Attacking the genetic influence argument was Campbell, Muncer & Bibel (1987). The present authors argued that (1) statistical aggregation negates situational variability by design in including it in the error term, (2) temporal stability when established by similar measures in similar situations was predicted by a situationalist position, (3) aggression and criminality were only partially overlapping concepts, and (4) adoption studies failed to find evidence of genetic influence on aggressive behaviour.

Similarly, Ellis (1987) suggested that criminality may be linked to parents who produced a large number of off-spring with minimal care given to each off-spring. It was argued that several seemingly unrelated factors that were found associated with serious violent and property offences were predictable by hypothesising that criminal behaviour was part of a selected

approach to reproduction. Data indicated that serious criminal behaviour appeared to be associated with large families, prematurity and low birth weight, early sexual activity, greater promiscuity, broken homes, child neglect and abuse and shorter life expectancy.

A later study by Ellis (1988) described an R-selected approach to reproduction that emphasised producing large numbers of off-spring with minimal care given to each off-spring by its parents and a K-selection approach in which few off-spring are produced, but maximal care is taken to ensure reproductive viability of each offspring. It was argued that several factors associated with serious criminal behaviour to victims (e.g. serious violence and property offences) were predictable by hypothesising that criminal behaviour was part of an R-selected approach to reproduction. Evidence that criminal behaviour was R-selected was presented, and R-selected traits found in persons with histories of serious delinquency/ criminality. A study of 31,436 adult Danish men by Mednick, Brennan & Kandel (1988) found no evidence of hereditary transmission of violent criminal behaviour. There was evidence however that violent delinquent and adult offenders exhibited an elevated frequency of brain damage. The potential sources of this brain damage existed in the pre-natal and perinatal course of development.

4. Dealing with or Treating the Problem of Diagnosing and Treating Criminal Behaviour

As is usually the case, despite there being a considerable amount of research in the area of causes of criminal behaviour, relatively little is available on the subject of dealing with the problem which emerges. The conflict between civil liberties and the observation of rules of law which give structure to a society are noted by Dunham (1977). He noted that psychiatry and sociology both threaten and support civil liberties. He is opposed to the legal compulsory treatment for psychiatric patients yet at the same time, provides no alternative for those who may well end up in prison or committing offences against helpless victims. Perris *et al* (1984) discusses the consequences of the Italian Reform Law (Law 180) that sanctions the definitive closing of all mental hospitals in Italy by the end of 1980. This is very much the same as in many other countries in Europe and elsewhere. The prohibition against compulsory admission to the old mental hospitals and the lack of alternative facilities at general hospitals creates a serious problem for many severely ill individuals and their families. There is now a much stronger likelihood that the ill behaviour will be described as anti-social demeanour or as criminal behaviour. This causes an increase in admissions to state forensic psychiatric hospitals not covered by law 180 in Italy. It has resulted in the fact that most special psychiatric units in general hospitals are overloaded.

Most countries now face the apparently insurmountable task of dealing with offenders against the law, the particular culture or nation. The legal system unfortunately functions on a right or wrong, black or white, criteria and assumes that individuals have total control over their actions. One must also discriminate between attributing blame to the criminal or

not attributing blame and the action which follows. It must be assumed that a criminal act has occurred and whether this be due to deep psychological problems or conscious and premeditated desire to commit an action is of less importance than the diagnostic assessment of the individual's demeanour and how it can best be modified through psychological techniques currently available.

There will undoubtedly always be the need for prisons but what occurs within these prisons is of the greatest significance. Hence prisons will always be seen as punitive establishments but in addition to this, they could also be seen as rehabilitative centres where the individual may learn to pursue new ways of behaving which does not eventually when released, lead to further anti-social behaviour. The primary role of prisons and the manner in which they are to change must be that they are no longer merely custodial centres where men and women spend varying periods of time and then are automatically released on the basis of the sentence they are to serve but rather on the capacity of such individuals to face freedom without further offences being committed by them.

It is difficult to escape from the apparent fatalism of genetic factors that may predispose almost certainly some individuals to follow lives of crime. This should not however dispirit the practitioner who seeks to help to modify behaviour albeit the task may seem insurmountable in remedying such predestined demeanour. The approach must well be to re-direct aggressive, criminal or anti-social demeanour into appropriate acceptable channels of behaviour. In order for this to occur the whole philosophy of prison systems must be directed not towards adopting a soft option for prisoners but rather a more determined effort being made to rehabilitate than merely incarcerating.

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MOZART: SAINT OR SINNER?

by Ruth Ward

FEW people would deny Mozart's right to glory as a musician, but in other aspects he remains a mystery. The surviving portraits of him are so diverse that, apart from the fact that he was small of stature, we cannot be sure of his physical appearance. The same dilemma confronts us over his character. Biographies vary enormously, and much of the evidence used by early biographers is unreliable. His wife, Constanze, gave her information thirty-eight years after his death. Her perspectives had changed, her memory may have been inaccurate and she may have embellished certain details. For example, both she and her sister, Sophie, were present at Mozart's deathbed, but their accounts of the events there differ. Even the style of his own letters varies widely according to the recipient, and the personality of the writer remains elusive.

The two films about Mozart's life could scarcely be more different. 'Whom the Gods Love', an early black and white romantic film, portrays him as a sweet sickly saint. 'Amadeus', the film of the musical, presents us with a drunken foul-mouthed lout, who happens to be musically inspired by God, but is in all other respects totally objectionable. To assess Mozart fairly, we must sweep away the myths, the exaggerations and the romanticisms.

Perhaps a clue to his complex character can be found in his Christian names, Wolfgang Amadeus: the first, a common down-to-earth Germanic name, the second romantic and latinized, meaning 'beloved of God'. Both elements were present in his mercurial nature. Many biographers, unwilling to accept the earthy side of his character, simply ignored the distasteful passages in his letters. Georg Nissen, for example, Constanze's second husband, vigorously crossed out some explicitly sexual references from a letter to Constanze, but a photographic technique later revealed them. Much more offensive are his early letters to his cousin, 'Bäsli', who shared his smutty sense of humour. Yet on other occasions he was capable of writing letters of great beauty, displaying a pure and simple faith. When his mother died, he wrote such a letter to the Abbé Bullinger, a family friend, asking him to comfort his father. 'All I ask of you at present is to act the part of a true friend, by preparing my poor father very gently for this sad news. When her illness became dangerous, I prayed to God for two things only—a happy death for her, and strength and courage for myself; and God in His goodness heard my prayer and gave me those two blessings in the richest measure. I beg you therefore, most beloved friend, watch over my father for me and try to give him courage so that, when he hears the worst, he may not take it too hardly'. Another such is the letter written to his father in which he talks of his presentiment of early death, and his calm acceptance of God's will. It is hard to believe these words came from the same pen as the obscene jokes written to Bäsli, or the feeble frivolous witticisms to his sister.

Mozart's attitude to others is as varied as his writing. In general, he liked people and enjoyed company, but he could on occasions form strong and unreasonable prejudices. His remarks about his fellow composer, Clementi, are most unkind and unjustified. And some of his letters show an unpleasant tendency to make fun of people. Yet to many friends he displayed a generous forgiving nature, turning a blind eye to their failings and seeing only their good points. This is especially true of Anton Stadler, the clarinettist, who borrowed from Mozart and sold his pawn tickets behind his back. Mozart admired him for his talent and readily forgave his shortcomings.

The eighteenth century was an age of liberal sexual mores, and it has often been suggested that Mozart conformed to this. Yet all the evidence points the other way. Before his marriage, he wrote to his father, 'I cannot live as most young men do these days,' and goes on to explain his reasons: he is too religious, he has too much honour to seduce an innocent girl, and too much care for his health to fool about with whores. All this displays common sense and decency. Shortly afterwards, he quarrelled with his fiancée, Constanze Weber, over an incident at a party where she, having incurred a forfeit, had allowed a young roué to measure her inside leg. Mozart's distress and disappointment is plain: he tells her that he would not have taken such a liberty with her. Towards the end of his life, when Constanze was at Baden for her health, he again begs her to behave respectably, and states that she is too free and easy with 'N.N.' Whoever N.N. was, Mozart is clearly upset, and later writes of feeling 'a kind of emptiness which hurts me dreadfully, a kind of longing which is never satisfied'. Not the letter of an unfaithful husband!

Much has been made of his poverty and debts, but these may also have been exaggerated. He obviously pursued an extravagant life-style: he wore expensive clothes and had his hair dressed each morning by a barber, but in his social position, with court appearances and recitals, such expenses were necessary. The Mozarts entertained frequently and their homes were lavishly and tastefully furnished. They had two maids and a manservant. When finances were troublesome, they solved the problem by moving to a less prestigious area: during their ten-year marriage they made eight moves! After Mozart's death, Constanze told the Emperor that their debts were not rashly incurred, but rather the result of circumstances over which they had no control, such as medical treatment for frequent illness, when they had no fixed income.

Another myth is the idea that Mozart always wrote perfect manuscripts. The six string quartets dedicated to Haydn show numerous corrections. Mozart did, however, have a prodigious memory and a remarkable capacity for storing ideas in his head. He wrote the overture to *Don Giovanni* in two hours on the day of the opening performance, and the orchestra received it half an hour before the curtain rose! The writing on the manuscript, now yellowed with age, betrays no sign of haste or alteration: in this case Mozart was writing simply to the dictation of his memory.

The greatest enigma is his death. Was he poisoned by a jealous rival,

or did he die from natural causes? The information about his last illness is as varied as his portraits. Some biographers depict a touching scene of the dying man, struggling to finish his *Requiem*, surrounded by friends playing and singing it with him. His sister-in-law, Sophie Haïbl, states that only she, Constanze and Mozart's pupil, Franz Xaver Süssmayr, were present. A less romantic view comes from his son, Karl, who was seven at the time. He recalls the overpowering stench of the sickroom, and indeed it must have been appalling as Mozart was bedridden, semi-paralysed and had developed vomiting and diarrhoea.

Whatever the scene, Sophie's account proves that he accepted death calmly and uncomplainingly, worrying only about the future of his wife and sons. Sophie tried to fetch a priest to attend him, but had great difficulty in persuading one to come. Surely this did not matter for one who years earlier had written to his father, 'As death is the true end and aim of our lives, I have for the last two years made myself so well acquainted with this true, best friend of mankind, that his image no longer terrifies, but calms and consoles me. For this blessing I thank my Creator every day and wish with all my heart that I could share it with all my fellow men'.

VOICE OF NEW ZEALAND: THE POETRY OF ALLEN CURNOW

by A. L. Rowse

AS a Cornishman I have always been proud to think that out there at the end of the line — as far from Cornwall as one could possibly get — New Zealand gave us as its foremost poet one of Cornish stock. Not only that, but his name means 'the Cornishman'. I am envious of that, with my name that might be just English, at any rate undistinguished and indistinguishable. True, when I was made a bard at our Gorseth I was given the bardic name of 'Lef Kernow', the Voice of Cornwall. I regard Allen as the Voice of New Zealand.

On top of that his father was a Tremayne Curnow. What could be more Celtic than that? Tremayne is a familiar, historic name with us — there are several places of that name, meaning the hamlet by the rock. Our county, or little land rather, is full of rocks and carns and such things. Moreover, I notice from one or two of Allen's poems that his father had a recognisable Cornish temper, grittily explosive — nothing easy going — in the English manner about us.

The Curnows come from West Cornwall, the tip of land between Penzance, St Ives and Land's End. I first met Allen when he visited me here, on his way to see the graves of his people in the churchyards in our West, Penwith, (I wish he had written a poem about that). We have met here again in later years, perhaps also at Oxford — where the University Press has been run by New Zealanders for a couple of generations — and midway in the years in New York. Again appropriately, for the great bulk of our people are Cornish Americans.

A famous Russian writer, disillusioned with the way things were in 19th century Russia (when have they not been, and with reason?), wrote that he regarded its literature as the country in which he lived and moved and had his being. Our literature now has the richness and fertility of being a world literature. Into it there flow all these streams of writing — the largest of them from North America; from Australia and South Africa; the West Indies, India itself.

Naturally then, the poems by Curnow that I like best are those that bring New Zealand home to me, autobiographical poems like 'Country School (near Canterbury)', 'Rite of Spring', 'Phantom of War in the Pacific', and the fine poem, 'Landfall in Unknown Seas' that celebrates Tasman's first sighting of those magical islands:

> Suddenly exhilaration
> Went off like a gun, the whole
> Horizon, the long chase done,
> Hove to. There was the seascape
> Crammed with coast, surprising
> As new lands will, the sailor
> Moving on the face of the waters . . .

I respond also to the biographical poems, some of them commemorating fine fellows lost in the wars unloosed upon our century by militarist

Japanese and Germans. Nor do some of us here at home in Britain forget what we owed to the Anzacs in keeping the barbarians at bay, fighting after all for what was a better, more hopeful idea of civilisation.

Specially am I touched by those brief tributes to those early emigrants, with their courage, building the foundations of a new nation so faraway from home — the poem to 'Fanny Rose May':

> Great-aunt, surviving of that generation
> Whose blood sweetens the embittered seas between
> Fabulous old England and these innovations
> My mountainous islands: in the bright sad scene
> I praise with you your voyage . . .

But why 'embittered'? I do not understand the epithet, except in the sense of the grief those early exiles felt at what they were leaving behind, the loneliness of a new unexplored country. There must have been many a heart-ache among those early pioneers. I welcome a passing tribute — no more — to Bishop Selwyn: a truly great man, no doubt about that: it is only right that Cambridge should keep his memory green in the College named for him there. My own William Colenso was not a great man, but it is wonderful what we at home owe to the thousands of seeds and hundreds of new plants he sent back to be domesticated here, especially in his native Cornwall. (*We* can grow New Zealand tree-ferns!).

So, in spite of an early poem, 'Colonial Outlook' and youthful expressions of discontent with things as they are — to be expected of poets — thank goodness we do not find any of the inferiority-complex which is such a bore in the writings of Patrick White, especially about his accent. Naturally some accents are more attractive than others — our West Country rather than East Anglia or Glasgow, Virginia more appealing than Massachusetts. But what is wonderful is the astonishing variety and prolific richness of the language, its dialects and accents all round the world. There is something to be proud of — fulfilling the famous prophecy of the Elizabethan poet:

> And who, in time, knows whether we may vent
> The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
> To enrich unknowing nations with our stores . . .
> May come refined with the accents that are ours?

And, in fact, it is nice to think that our prime authority on the language today is a New Zealander, Robert Burchfield. Science is international, but the glory of the famous Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge was another, the great Rutherford.

For us humanists our common country is our language and its literature. A cursory glance through Allen's poems brings that home to us — references to and phrases from the Authorised Version of the Bible and Shakespeare, of course, but also Webster and even Landor. It is hard to place Curnow in the tradition, the grand line of our poets — there is a sense in which one can think of him as a Metaphysical poet. That is not at all in conflict with his modernity; he is in the fullest sense a modernist poet, and the Metaphysicals were notoriously modernist in their day, characterised by their addiction to 'wit', which meant, briefly, intellectualism.

It is remarkable how Allen has kept abreast of the modern movement in verse. One might sum up the long and fruitful stretch, from the early

'Colonial Outlook' to the sequence of poems on the Assassination of Aldo Moro, in a phrase: from Colonial to Cosmopolitan. I am wholly with him about the horrors of the contemporary world and modern society in full and fatal flourish. Not so sure about the poetics, though it may well be that the idiom is in keeping with those.

The trouble with modernist verse is that when set loose from traditional form, from scansion and regular beat and rhythm, it is less memorable. In making less impact, does it pass Hardy's test, so beloved of Larkin, of words springing from the heart expressed rhythmically in such a way as to move other hearts? Modernist poetry springs from the head, and is obsessively concerned to make its point otherwise, by wit. Here I recall a word from a great historian of literature, W. P. Ker: writing of Addison he warned, 'all true and noble poetry is simple, attending to the main theme, not going off into false wit'.

Much of modernist verse is not poetry at all, but false wit. Allen Curnow's is not: he is a true poet and a noble one.

The August number of *Contemporary Review* includes *Scientists and the Public* by Peter Hodgson, *The Narmada Project: Indian Economic Miracle or Environmental Disaster?* by B. Seshadri and *Road to Rot: The New Oxford English Dictionary* by A. D. Harvey.

THE SOUND OF RADIO DRAMA

by Tim Gebbels

THE place, Central London's Grosvenor House hotel; the time, Monday April 29, 1991; the occasion, the Sony radio awards. British radio's equivalent of the Oscar nominations set me wondering just why television in this country has so comprehensively usurped radio as the medium of mass entertainment.

Usurpation it surely is for only a brief comparison between the role of television in our society today and that played by radio, say, before 1960 shows that nothing has changed save the fact that the big box in the corner of the principal room in most homes now sends pictures as well as sound. In its day the radio was regarded as a piece of furniture occupying a key position in the drawing room, standing magnificently on a sideboard perhaps glowing like some kind of latter day idol. With radio as with TV now, its physical location told of its significance to the family unit. It was an activity for the whole family. Then Mr. and Mrs. Listener, possibly with children if they were considered grown up enough, would settle down to an improving broadcast from the Home Service or Third Programme, while now it would be Emmerdale, Wogan or Film 91. Radio can no longer demand that degree of devotion. Reduced by technology to the size of a domestic box of matches it is, more often than not, carried round as an item of personal rather than family property. Assimilating radio is now for most people an adjunct to some other daily business be it driving to the office, ironing or homework. This perception of radio as an accompaniment to something else is quite definitely a decline, for listening once had the status viewing now has — namely as an activity in its own right.

Of course the picture is a deal more complex than that, but any more exhaustive an analysis between listening and viewing habits, past or present, is not really my interest. What puzzles me are the relative profiles in the national awareness between drama in particular on radio and television. In the United Kingdom the BBC is basically the sole purveyor of radio drama, and the combined output of the two radio networks which carry it approaches some five hundred separate productions a year. It was once said by a senior radio producer that his medium was the best platform for dramatic writing on account of its versatility. He was talking specifically about science fiction at the time and the point was well made. When setting scenes or creating atmospheres radio need concern itself with very few of the financial and technical constraints that constantly create headaches for TV drama crews. Be it a medieval street, the flight deck of a space ship or the inside of someone's head, radio can achieve it certainly without requiring a huge budget and almost certainly without incurring near insurmountable technical problems. The scenery does not wobble on radio and the director is not dogged by the myriad questions of continuity his TV counterpart faces. Providing he can achieve the right

mix of radio drama's four basic constituents — words, music, sound and silence — he can transport the listener to whatever time and place he desires. Despite this potential, in the field of drama, radio continues to exist as television's poor relation.

When Douglas Adams's science fantasy *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* was broadcast on BBC television in the mid 1980s, it rapidly achieved wide acclaim. How many of its enthusiastic viewers though knew that Adams actually wrote the story for radio nearly ten years earlier. I would be willing to bet it was a pretty low proportion and the same can be said for other TV hits. 'Up the Garden Path', 'After Henry' and 'Second Thoughts' have, or will, become widely recognised only after televising, with few who watch and enjoy them realizing that they largely owe their appearance on TV to previous success as Light Entertainment programming on radio. I mention these programmes because they serve to illustrate my contention that the only significant arena for dramatic expression in the mass culture of today is television and not radio despite the advantages, in terms of resources, which the latter possesses. It is the stridently searching drama documentary on Channel Four or the pithily written screenplay on BBC Two which attracts press attention the following day. Radio drama as it is currently made could not do this — it is just not glamorous enough. Whether plays on radio could ever be sufficiently exciting-entertaining-popular to rival television in terms of audience figures is debatable. It may by its nature be a less potent force. What I am convinced of is that radio drama does not try nearly as hard as it could to attract listeners and that it consistently under-utilizes the resources at its disposal.

A friend once remarked to me that they could not listen to a radio play, not something they attempted often, on their own admission, without visualizing a gravel tray, a split coconut and a bunch of actors with scripts in their hands. At the time the comment seemed to me unfair but it increasingly dawned how, unwittingly, my friend had put his finger on one of radio drama's chief failings. It is a technical one. It is often boring and hard work to listen to simply because its quality is too high. The lack of imagination with which a lot of radio directors approach scripts is often painfully manifest in flat, one dimensional use of acoustics and sound effects.

Radio studios are designed to be acoustically neutral, that is to favour neither high or low frequency sound. Entering one for the first time can be a novel experience. The voice and all other sound loses its natural resonance which helps to characterize it in daily life. It becomes dead sounding. Scenes in a play are of course set in different locations and at the time of recording under a director's control, studio managers accordingly change the acoustics in the studio to provide the characteristic sound of whatever room or place the script demands: a court room, a car interior or a living room. The rest is a question of sound effects. The point is that the variation in acoustic environments is incredibly unadventurous. We have one particular sound for all living accommodation. There is a small

space for kitchens. We enter somewhere a tiny bit echoey for court rooms, cow sheds and hotel foyers, and somewhere a bit more echoey for cathedral transepts and warehouse floors. In each the quality is perfect and hence unconvincing. In addition, nearly all radio drama today is recorded stereophonically but it is a technique used basically because it is there and not because it possesses artistic advantages over monophonic recording. It does of course but they are often not exploited as fully as they might be. It is well known that in many cases a photographer will prefer to capture a subject in black and white as opposed to colour, the choice between the two being analogous to that, in theory, made by a radio director between mono and stereo. In the latter case unlike that of photography, the more sophisticated technique is invariably chosen, not for esthetic reasons, but just because it is the more sophisticated, with any artistic merit of the simpler method (mono) ignored.

In fairness it has to be acknowledged that radio is in many senses victim of its own history. For the first thirty years until the 1950s and the advent of FM broadcasting, it was not a high fidelity medium and for the many listeners who still today tune in to Long Wave and Medium Wave frequencies, purist arguments about acoustic reality and the use of stereo are meaningless. It must be a great frustration for many radio drama personnel that the time and effort they put into a recording is lost on perhaps the greater number of their audience simply by virtue of the fact of what receivers and frequencies they use. These do not in any way constitute an excuse for a director; a disgruntled author who has grown to despise the way his publisher markets his books does not therefore neglect his grammar and punctuation when writing.

If in criticizing radio drama soundtracks as one dimensional and flat sounding, we identify the use of acoustics and methods of recording, we can also point to incidental sound effects. Sound for radio plays is provided in two ways. Either it is pre-recorded and comes from a record, tape or compact disc or it is created on the spot in the studio during the take. A car engine or galloping horse would be an example of the former, while a cigarette being lit or door opening would most probably be realized at the time in the studio. Whatever the intention during production, sound effects frequently come across as merely sign posting an event rather than convincingly describing it. Seldom does it really sound as though characters and dialogue are fully integrated with the environment the incidental sound seems to be indicating. A scene set in a moving car usually fails because the background atmosphere consists only of a sanitized recording of a vehicle engine. It is unlikely to include the many varied and almost subliminal sounds that would in reality be present — external traffic, the minute movements of characters and internal vibration.

Over recent months BBC Radio has received a welter of complaints concerning the use of incidental music in plays with listeners claiming that it obscures other sound and breaks the concentration. This is rather a pity because properly used incidental music can be a powerful mood enhancer. Why it fails, if it does and we should perhaps remember here that there

is nothing intrinsically right in outraged opinion, is because directors commonly use music through some insufficiently developed notion that it is appropriate without really considering whether it is truly necessary to a production or what distinguishable effect they are actually trying to achieve with it. It is most likely to come from stock discs and while there is no reason in theory why such music should not be suitable, specially commissioned work is always more likely to serve a production better. Radio drama budgets preclude the extensive use of such scores but as this is the case directors ought more often to face the choice squarely between having incidental music for their productions or dispensing with it altogether. Library discs or previously published work should far less frequently be regarded as an acceptable alternative to specially commissioned scores.

For the self-appointed critic or living room director questions of presentation such as acoustics and the use of incidental sound and music constitute far easier pickings than the subject matter and scripting of much radio drama. Yet it is in this area that the medium's greater problem lies. Here it is harder to offer constructive criticisms and one has to rely more heavily on impressionistic beliefs and judgements. Nevertheless many radio plays seem to draw on a finite stock of scenarios and ideas. Marital difficulty, bereavement, self-discovery and recent redundancy are meat and drink to too many radio playwrights. Any resulting sense of *deja vu* aroused in a listener is not alleviated by the fact that the BBC draws its casts mostly from a ready pool of actors working on contracts of between six and eighteen months. The same voices recur therefore in different roles which, combined with stilted dialogue and unimaginative technical direction, can strain credibility and make generally for boring listening.

Having lamented the current popularity of radio theatre compared with television, and having denigrated the way it is made, it is perhaps legitimate at this point to ask the fundamental question — whether radio drama can have a future or whether it is just an anachronism, a curious piece of English obscurantism left over from the days of Lord Reith and Savoy Hill. Should it be allowed to die quietly as 'News and Current Affairs' in BBC Radio slowly consumes all other department's budgets?

There is no reason to suppose that radio repertory is a peculiarly national taste. The European Broadcasting Union's recent simultaneous transmission of a specially written play in ten languages, suggests, at least on the union's part, a belief that radio drama appeals across the continent. Further, it is a going concern in the United States and Australia to name only two and from the few ABC productions I have heard it sounds as though they have grasped more creatively the technical opportunities radio offers. The existence of an international market for radio drama holds no direct relevance for its fortunes in the UK, but it does counter any suggestion that it is purely a national eccentricity.

If radio is to win more listeners and raise its own profile in people's minds as a dramatic art form, it could draw encouragement from the fact that it has, in television, only the one serious rival, albeit a fairly powerful

one. The stage and large screen are not threats because, although they are far from moribund, they are essentially minority interests. Both owe their conception and early success to an era when there was no mass entertainment medium and both have the disadvantage of requiring a higher degree of initial enthusiasm from their audiences. By their nature films and stage plays have to take place in special locations to which people must travel if they are to appreciate them. It is in recognition of this fact that the film industry promotes its products for television far quicker these days than ever it did, say, ten or fifteen years ago. With the advent of domestic video technology in the last decade also, films, for the purposes of my argument here, can be regarded as synonymous with TV. They are increasingly consumed in the same way.

If Radio then has to view only TV as its competitor, its tragedy is that it has been defeated in the one arena where it could realistically expect to score points. The sound tracks for television drama consistently have a flow and verisimilitude entirely lacking in radio. The reason is not very hard to see. If a sequence requires a character to saddle a horse, mount and ride off, then generally speaking this is what is shot. The resulting sound track has a realism and conviction which the same sequence on radio probably would not have. Location recording is a good example. TV drama has an auditory vibrancy because environments called for by a script have to be created much more elaborately. The easiest way to do this often is to go on location and use real telephone boxes, canteens, streets and hospital corridors. The sad irony is that television does this for visual credibility and the sound track is in many ways incidental. For radio each and every sound has to be imagined and realized from scratch and therefore, perversely, fails. This though is the one artistic field in which Radio can seriously join battle with television. It has to be said however that radio can, if infrequently, be very satisfying. When tackling Shakespeare say or Dickens or a more modern epic it can be just as captivating as TV and it is in this area perhaps that radio must draw its salutary lesson. If a script is sufficiently well written with tight credible dialogue and strong character realization, technical considerations such as acoustics, sound and music become secondary. As before one has to refer to more subjective judgements, but it does seem at least tenable that radio accepts on average a quality of script writing far inferior to the standard television sets itself. The dichotomy is not to be overdone — there is plenty of corny TV drama around, it is just that there is more on radio.

The small screen is primarily a visual medium and that is why radio in the 1990s is unlikely ever to win the ratings war or even come a close second. What it could and should be aiming at is a much larger slice of the prestige pie than it presently gets together with equal status as TV in many more people's perception as a means of dramatic expression.

A GREAT GERMAN NOVEL

by H. P. Rickman

IN 1908 a very unusual book was published in Germany — *Pitt und Fox* by Friedrich Huch. This small volume, of which 150,000 copies had been printed by 1927 contains an exceptional and absorbingly interesting novel. It deserves to be better known and more widely read. What makes the book intriguing is a paradox which will strike the English reader. It reflects and, indeed, sharply illuminates characteristic features of German life and culture. This makes it serious and significant — something we may have come to expect from a German work. But here is the surprise which cuts across our stereotyped notions of what to expect from Germany: the novel is light-hearted throughout, cheerful, humorous and at times even farcical without degenerating into heavy-footed slapstick. The action moves along briskly, the characters are drawn vividly, precisely and deliberately. The underlying allegory on the conflicting aspects of the German national character is wittily ironic but never crudely obtrusive.

Pitt und Fox is not a historical novel. The title is explained in the first sentences, 'Pitt — this is what Philip Sintrup called his reflection when, as a small child, he saw and touched it with his fingers for the first time. Thus the family labelled him and, with a kind of logic, his younger brother was called Fox'. The sub-title of the book reveals its theme, 'The courtships of the brothers Sintrup', and the story in fact hinges on their contrasted characters and linked destinies. We see them pass from childhood through various love affairs to marriage.

Pitt, in psychological jargon, is an extreme introvert; a dreamer, sensitive and intelligent, he is constantly engaged in withdrawing from the world and evading responsibility; he regards even his nearest relatives with detached amusement. Remote and rather cold — though impersonally kind and considerate — he lacks drive and enthusiasm though not strength of character. Plagued by restlessness and indecision he feels himself incapable of steadfast love and warm affection. Fox is an extrovert and empty gasbag. While Pitt's incapacity to attach himself borders on the tragic Fox is ridiculous. He is pompous and has an inflated idea of himself. Hypocritical and self-deceiving, he hides a ruthless selfishness which can amount to cruelty behind sanctimonious sentiments. There is real evil in Fox yet he is not without certain positive qualities which his brother lacks, such as gusto, enterprise and a desire to please.

Their contrasting characters appear in their childhood fantasies:

> . . . when Fox had finished he (Pitt) related without emphasis that similar things had happened to him but everything had been in reverse. Instead of attacking his enemies he had hidden from them by pressing motionless against a fence so that they took him for a wooden post. While the thickest planks of the bridge resounded under his brother's steps, a straw was enough for Pitt to cross the water and escape from his persecutors. Among these quite unobtrusively were his nearest relations, his own parents. Mr. Sintrup was at their head and Mrs. Sintrup sunned herself motionlessly at the mouth of a cave so that he could not pass to make his final withdrawal. If Fox became king in the end Pitt was never

heard of again and did not know himself where he had got to. At such moments Fox revelled in the feeling of his imaginary strength. Mr. Sintrup said, 'You'll go far, but you, Pitt, might as well lie down and die'. Then Pitt stealthily took out a notebook, found a certain page and made a pencil mark. His father and mother always said the same things and he kept a sort of statistics of them.

At school Pitt is distant and ironic and withdraws from a girl who becomes too affectionate; soon he does not even remember her face. Fox cultivates younger girls with a view to their suitability for marriage. Yet he changes his loves frequently. He is lazy at school but apes the grown-ups, repeats their sayings and talks big to impress them. Pitt does his work indifferently and without emotion; he feels he is living in a dream but to everybody's surprise he comes out top in matric. At the subsequent celebration he effaces himself so much that his brother is able to pose as the hero of the occasion. Pitt, indifferent to his career, but glad to escape from home, goes off to study law. He passes quietly through his universities, and, at one stage, having come into some money, travels. He absorbs himself in philosophy. Finally he takes his degree. Fox scrapes through his matric at the second attempt and moves to the university in great pomp. There he aspires to the life artistic, collects pictures, participates in amateur dramatics and goes to concerts to shed solemn tears. He is in pursuit of a rounded, richly cultured personality but remains an amateur, a poseur and a failure in everything. By extravagant living he runs through his money and plunges into debt. Finally his father refuses to pay and he becomes an actor in a second-rate repertory company. His pompous demeanour is at first a comic success but soon his lack of variety and acting ability becomes evident and he has to leave.

The central theme of the story is Pitt's relationship with the fair, lighthearted and charming Elfriede. After a period of pleasant friendship Elfriede becomes intensely emotional and this plunges Pitt into confusion and fear which makes him go away. Pitt then makes friends with a simple young girl, the daughter of his brother's landlady, but again he withdraws from the scene, this time because he does not want to take advantage of the girl's simple innocence. There follows a love affair with a shining self-confident girl who makes him take his exam, forces him into daily walks and generally plans his life for him. They plan to get married but, though she is full of courage and confidence, she feels his passive resistance to her control growing and abruptly terminates their relationship. After that Pitt is pursued by a rich banker's daughter. His rudeness to her only encourages her. She arranges for him to become editor of an art journal controlled by her father, but he continues to resist her advances. Suddenly he hears from Elfriede. She offers him a friendship without demands on his elusive personality; he comes to love her and though he warns her of his inconstancy and weakness, she has the courage and love to accept him. The wanderer has found his Penelope and there is a prospect of their happiness as the book closes.

Meanwhile Fox with all his bluster follows in the footsteps of his quiet brother. He catches his landlady's daughter on the rebound after his brother's desertion and, less scrupulous than Pitt, he seduces her. When

she becomes pregnant he tries to slide out of his responsibilities, half deluding himself that Pitt was really responsible. For once Pitt acts; he forces his brother into an acceptance of responsibility and makes arrangements for the girl. Later, when Pitt finds the banker's daughter rather pressing he sends for Fox, manoeuvres him into taking over the editorship and encourages him to court the banker's daughter. He fades from the scene leaving his brother well established in a good job and with a rich wife. Something of the comedy of Fox's falling in love is worth quoting:

> What a face Pitt would make if Fox achieved that for which he had struggled in vain! ... a whole million! The most valuable thing in life is to live well, that everybody has to admit, and whoever does not admit it lacks the means for such a life and it is easy for him to talk about modest contentment, for what else could the poor thing do? Indeed, to marry just to live well, that was mean and nasty and he, Fox, was the first to condemn it in every case! No, no, love must come into it and he felt quite clearly that in his case it was about to make its entrance; if he married her it would be a rich love match, this was the right word, terse, precise and significant. Didn't he really feel himself almost in love? He wrinkled his brow listening for a small still voice. Really there was nothing inside to confirm it. But love is often blind to itself; how often do people discover it only when by a sudden gust of passion all obscuring veils of the so-called waking consciousness are torn ... Romeo even loved Juliet immediately and without special reason, after he had first languished for his Rosalind ...

And Fox imposes successfully on a girl very willing to be deceived.

> And now came Fox Sintrup — he was a very different type of man! His strength had not been squandered. When he put his arms around her then she could have the tranquil feeling, she was the first he had touched! She would have staked her life on that! It occurred to her that at the beginning she had often laughed about him. But what had she really laughed about? ... About a certain awkwardness caused by his pure attitude towards women. One might smile but not laugh over this! And what genuine, downright and pure views of life he held! He who loved her only for her own sake.

While thus recounting the amorous adventures of the brothers Sintrup the book introduces us to a number of delightfully comic characters and produces a good-humoured satire of German middle-class life. The whole book breathes a warm-hearted droll humour which draws from us kindly laughter. But it would not be the great book I think it is if it were only a comedy of manners or a satire on a pompous imposter; or, even, the drama of an irresolute dreamer who finds it hard to accept the ties of love. In fact it is more; it is a searching and indeed prophetic unfolding of the German soul, or if one prefers this way of putting it, of the peculiarities of German culture which has made Germany such a problem in Europe.

Pitt, no doubt, represents what we, as well as cultured Germans, are apt to consider the best side of Germany. Though the author has the wisdom not to describe him as a philosophic or poetic genius, he has depth, seriousness, a delicate unquiet conscience and — though transposed into a gentle dreamy key — something of the Faustian restlessness. He also possesses originality, imagination, intelligence, whimsical humour and that patient scholarliness which will produce two volumed prolegomena to the study of a subject. In a quiet way he is even effective and successful, passes examinations, gains the love of women and achieves what he wants. Indeed he leads and his blustering brother follows and where Fox succeeds he enters a breach made by Pitt. This forms the fundamental pattern of the book and is expressed quite clearly: 'Now he fed on the past, sought to

imitate his brother even in externals and combined his oddities with the pomp of his own personality and nobody saw the insignificant little ship which drew this proud three-master in its wake'.

Yet Pitt has glaring defects; he drifts, and squanders his abilities, avoids responsibility and does not assert his intelligence and essential decency in deliberate leadership. On the contrary he takes impish delight in his brother's posturing and the self-righteousness with which he hides his ruthlessly selfish aspirations. To others Fox appears a healthy, clean-living, high-minded and ambitious young man; vigorous, upright and dependable. If he seems a little ridiculous it is only because of his earnest idealism and unworldly simplicity. To Pitt all this is just one of life's comedies at which he laughs as a detached spectator. He knows his brother to be stupid, humourless, self-deceiving and hypocritical; he knows his laziness, pleasure-seeking vulgarity and incapacity for love; he knows him to be capable of complete brutality in his egoism. Yet he not only condones all this but even connives at his success.

In the book all turns out well; on the whole Fox remains farcical; at moments he appears pathetic. Once in the book he almost precipitates tragedy when he refuses all responsibility for the girl he has seduced and she nearly commits suicide. But Pitt intervenes and puts everything right. In the end Fox has done nothing more than insinuate himself into the graces of the spoilt and sensuous daughter of a rich man. Yet in all this the genius of Huch has portrayed a grim reality far beyond the scope of pleasant farce.

This vision of reality not only reflected the German past and present but proved truly prophetic. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Germany had produced a dazzling galaxy of philosophers, poets and musicians but the men who created this splendid intellectual and cultural climate and, indeed, the whole social class which sustained them, remained politically impotent and socially irrelevant. The lack of power was a reason for their intense inwardness and the price they paid for it. Lacking political will and purpose the Pitts and Tonio Kröger remained ineffective and left the stage to the Foxes, to rule and represent Germany. In our own century this relationship, so light-heartedly yet so accurately sketched by Huch, turned into nightmare. Hitler—like Fox before him—at first aroused our laughter because of his humourless megalomania, his vulgarity and his scarcely veiled duplicity. The German intellectuals, perhaps with little smiles of derision, connived at his rise, bestowed on him respectability and thus helped him to solid achievement. Germany's capitalists, and with them the middle classes, though smiling a little at his crudity, took him to their hearts—as Miss Heine did Fox—because they thought him virile and unspoiled and because they believed that he loved them in his heart. Thus this humorous novel provides a more profound commentary on a nation's tragedy than any tract or treatise.

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Literary Supplement

RUSSIAN VOICES

Russian Voices. Tony Parker. Jonathan Cape. 481pp. £15.99.

The author spent five months in Moscow to tape record 141 people from many walks of life. They were schoolchildren, World War veterans, intellectuals, women and men, people who had visited Britain and foreigners living in Moscow. He also interviewed Communist Party officials, KGB men, who told him nothing really, not even their surnames, and also, most interestingly, two women and two men who had been actively involved in the historic Chernobyl nuclear disaster that is still haunting the Soviet Union.

All the interviewees loved to talk and felt free to do so. But all of them, especially the intellectuals, said also that they were not at all certain how long that would last. Those who are still members of the Communist Party were of two kinds. There were those who had joined because their parents had and because it was the natural thing to do. But none even hinted that Communism was a superior ideology and would win, or even argued about Communism. This gave the impression that it was a sort of secular religion one did not really have to believe in. Teachers who had to set out a different history from what they had taught just earlier explained that this is what they had been told to say. The others said they had joined because it helps their career and getting accommodation.

Couples were interviewed and it appears that very many live together unmarried so as to by-pass that strict, little mentioned, regulation that one has to have a residence permit before moving and that is simply ignored. Again, both abortion and divorce are obvious and so is remarriage and separation from parents, especially fathers. Most interviewees tell the story of their life briskly mentioning such facts. Men, some women complain, shrug off abortion and housework as being a woman's job that does not really concern them. Again, homosexual groups live in the streets and earn a Black Market living.

There are fascinating details like a former conscript telling the story that he was sent to a Cavalry Regiment, given a horse and told he had a year to learn to ride it. Then there is the Party official who protests that he had a car because of his duties and not because he was a member.

In one interview, and the names of all of them are given, which shows that they are feeling safe at the moment, a Professor of English explains that they had been taught that there was the glorious Soviet Union and other countries, small and poor or big and corrupt, where no-one lives happily as they do in the Soviet Union. Interestingly Stalin and Lenin are mentioned, the first as, although a monster, still having some prestige and the second as a distant sage. Gorbachev is not really mentioned or in the picture. Neither are the problems of the non-Russian ethnic groups.

The most dramatic interviews are those with the Chernobyl people. They all explain that they were told the station was the best built and safest in the world. The first three went out into the street the morning after because they had not been told what had happened. They felt a strange new sensation. The store manageress got out with her small son in the first train and hid him wrapped in a coat under her seat. But radiation hit him all the same and he has not long to live. There is the newspaper editor who escaped but collapsed when taking a bath in Kiev when she saw that her young body was white but

her face viciously brown and she could pull out her hair.

The interview with Anton Vassilievich, the radiation expert sent there afterwards for months, is outstanding. There were the young unprotected soldiers ordered onto the roof of the building to shovel nuclear debris down to be picked up and they had just 20 seconds — or else.

The behaviour of radiation, he insists, is simply not properly understood. Spots with dangerously high radioactivity and those with none at all are sometimes close together. There was still no answer to what happened and why. The official number of 71 dead related in no way to those who died later from radiation-induced diseases like cancer and leukaemia. 'It is not a matter of hundreds or thousands but of a far greater figure because of the long-lasting after effects; as we speak the figure is still increasing day by day.' More than a million people had been evacuated from 432 places.

One cannot but admire the people who work there. It is a book, too, of simple grass roots personalities. It would be a good thing if the author picked another country next, South Africa, perhaps.

LEO MURAY

A CONTROVERSIAL POLITICIAN

Don't You Worry About That. The Joh Bjelke-Petersen Memoirs. Angus and Robertson. 1990. pp259.

When you cross the New South Wales border, the rail gauge changes and you are in another country. Queenslanders traditionally wish it were. Deadpan, they try to ignore the rest of the continent from Canberra to the Melbourne Cup. And the sight of a platypus against the strange Glasshouse Mountains prepares you for eccentrics and characters. John B-P is a true son of Queensland, though his father emigrated from Denmark. Ordained as a Lutheran pastor, his ill health threw the burden of their marginal farm on Joh, struggling with plough horse and dire poverty. He left school at 14 (including a sick year with polio) and seemed often to be sustained only by an unswerving faith. Gough Whitlam later called him a 'Bible bashing bastard from the backwoods', which did him no harm.

By twenty-one, Joh was pioneering agricultural machinery on a contract basis, and experimenting with other aspects of rural development which brought him to local politics, and in 1947 to a seat for the Country (now National) Party. His lifelong passion for flying took him to remote parts of Queensland, together with his long suffering wife Flo, herself later a Senator, and an indefatigable co-pilot, Beryl Young. Their journeys did more than any election pamphlet to unite the country and keep him in power for a record twenty years and doubled vote.

As a consistently right wing character, Sir Joh received a consistently bad press from the predominantly left wing journalists of Australia. History will judge his case. He was vilified for upholding the law against the anti- Springbok campaign. He probably did more than anyone else to destroy Gough Whitlam's Government and its attempt to create a centralised republican Australia, even leading a deputation of State Premiers to London. Gough conceded defeat that time but still swore he would be the first Republican president.

No twentieth century politician has been more controversial than Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, and none more successful. Whatever one thinks of his views, it is hard work, faith and courage which shine through his memoirs. He reflects with total lack of bitterness on political dirty tricks and his long battle with the media. He calmly describes his own political demise — but he is far

from dead. Even in Queensland there has never been anyone quite like Sir Joh and there probably never will be.

MOLLY MORTIMER

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN: MYSTIC RATIONALIST?

Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius. Ray Monk. Jonathan Cape. 1990. £20.00.

Ray Monk's book is a perfectly satisfactory one-volume biography of Wittgenstein: an even-handed treatment of the man and the work; well-researched, sympathetic and lucid. Wittgenstein, of all philosophers, perhaps stands most in need of such explication, for he himself aimed to address a wide audience: 'it is all the same to me what the professional philosophers of today think of me; for it is not for them that I am writing'.

Monk devotes an appendix to rebutting W. W. Bartley's lurid account of a Wittgenstein trawling the Prater for rough trade. He dismisses these allegations as unsubstantiated; elaborations, at most, on the philosopher's innocent fantasies. Monk, however, takes a suspect stance himself by using Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character* as a key to Wittgenstein's life (and the source of the book's subtitle). Though Wittgenstein certainly knew and praised Weininger's work, there is no proof that he consciously adopted its teachings. That said, Monk's schema in no way distorts his straightforward presentation of Wittgenstein's life.

That life was astonishingly rich. Wittgenstein's last words, 'Tell them I've had a wonderful life' seem, in retrospect, simply true. Born into one of the wealthiest and most cultivated families of a Vienna undergoing its last great cultural efflorescence, he was exemplary as engineer, architect or soldier; and a passionate music lover and devotee of Georg Trakl and Karl Kraus. Add to this an ascetic bent worthy of St. Francis, and one already has a remarkable man. Little wonder that his work seems to draw from and reach out to a far wider range of concerns than the narrower ambit of professional philosophers.

Wittgenstein found himself validating the breadth of his world against the reductionism of contemporary logicians and positivists who sought to prove that science and mathematics held all that a thinker need take seriously. 'I am not aiming at the same target as the scientists and my way of thinking is different from theirs', he wrote in 1930, and elsewhere he condemned 'a kind of idol worship, the idol being Science and the Scientist'. As an example of the consequences he instanced psychology, where 'there are experimental methods and *conceptual confusion* . . . problem and method pass one another by'.

The need for truth, so ingrained in Karl Kraus's peers, need not have led Wittgenstein to this particular stance, but his beginnings in the philosophy of mathematics led him both to evolve a general method and to apply it in a particular critique: 'philosophy is now being reduced to a matter of skill, and the philosopher's nimbus is disappearing'. Not that he aimed to erect a theory: rather, he insisted that in the end one could only show, not say, what one meant: 'as long as you do not see the new system, you have not got it'.

Russell was only the first to suffer from contact with this new philosophical practice, as the Vienna Circle of logical positivists later suffered. In each case the other party balked when Wittgenstein's much-revered clarity showed up the foundations of their own enterprise. 'Pretensions are a mortgage which burdens a philosopher's capacity to think', he wrote near his end; and the

pretensions he worked against were the same as exercised Heidegger: those, passed down from Plato via Descartes, which declared that the rational intellect has exclusive access to the Logos itself. By dissolving these pretensions Wittgenstein demonstrated, most tellingly in *On Certainty*, how thought could be clarified.

Like Heidegger, Wittgenstein arrived eventually at a position close to Daoism, in which articulated concepts are taken to obscure as much as they reveal and full reverence is accorded only to all of life with its manifold differences. Wittgenstein too held the same respect for practice and example, using logic to arrive at the limits of logic, and enjoyed the same regard for what lies to hand exalted into a near-mystic aptitude for unmediated perception of the order of things. For, in the words of the *Dao De Jing:*

> The way that can be expressed
> is not the eternal way.
> The name that can be named
> is not the eternal name.

PAUL MACKINTOSH

'THE GOD OF DANCE'

Romola and Nijinsky. Tamara Nijinsky. Bachman & Turner. £19.95.

Tamara Nijinsky, the younger daughter of the internationally renowned Russian dancer, has written an amazingly detailed account of their family life both during her childhood, when she loved her father above anyone else, and during the thirty years of his encroaching illness. Romola, her mother, had written two books describing her husband's career and his final helpless years when she struggled desperately to conceal the truth about his insanity which had begun to threaten, only four years after their dramatic and impulsive marriage. Tamara speaks eloquently about her mother's sacrifices to procure for Nijinsky the best of medical treatment and her refusal, almost obsessively, to accept the facts. These were that Nijinsky was not only gradually withdrawing from human contact but, if startled in any way, became extremely violent. His phenomenal strength was already legendary as it appeared in his dance when almost unnaturally high leaps into the air were performed on stage. His leg and arm muscles were like steel and his violent phases were extremely difficult to restrain.

Tamara held a grudge for many years that in her mother's books she had barely been mentioned, certainly not as one who had any significant place in the family circle. One problem was that she had been sent after her eighth year to be brought up by her maternal grandmother, Emilia. Two things worried her about this apparent exile: there must be a good reason for it if her adored father allowed it; and she felt that if she complained about going to live with her beautiful and famous grandmother in Budapest, whom she loved, she herself would risk losing her too. Feeling unwanted had already troubled the child, so that in spite of the luxurious life with her enchanting grandmother (the best loved actress in all Hungary, fêted in Paris and Rome) her anxious thoughts were constantly with the family at home. She was aware of an unexplained shadow in their lives.

Marriage to Romola brought to Nijinsky the untold benefits of being able to get on terms quickly with distinguished, influential people when taking the newly formed Russian Ballet on tour without the powerful Diaghilev, who

had split the *Ballets Russes* and taken it in another direction. To Romola this meant that her husband would be able to choose his own programmes including some with his own already recognised choreography. She undertook all the practical work of making bookings in every major city in Europe, aspiring finally to take Nijinsky to his beloved Russia to make his mark once more on the Imperial Ballet in St. Petersburg where his career had begun. She failed, however, to reckon with the cost of their bitter quarrel with Diaghilev when they married: Nijinsky discovered that he had been only one in a long line of protegés — Fokine, Bakst, Stravinsky and others — whom Diaghilev had quarrelled with when they showed an independent spirit. Romola had, after all, been used to Emilia's early fame when she herself had been at home in Budapest. After being received by Kruschev with unusual courtesy (and even the present of a sable coat delivered to her plane) the expected reconciliation never arrived: no invitation came from Diaghilev. Nijinsky, wholly engrossed in his art, had not only scorned the impresario's possessive love but had shown himself to be a choreographer of genius and therefore a serious rival in the art of dance.

Another obstacle in the path of the Nijinskys was the blocking of all exits to the east by the Russian army. Journeys to the USA were, however, possible. Romola, undaunted, set herself to organise performances in 53 States. Too late it became clear that the whole enterprise was turning out to be a taxing ordeal for Nijinsky, constantly performing dances whilst travelling uncomfortably 'like a circus' in a specially commissioned train. Dealing with all possible difficulties to spare her husband's vital energy whilst he became more and more aloof and remote from everyone Romola then determined that on their return home she would protect him from suffering the eclipse of fame that would be the inevitable outcome of publicity about the nature of his illness.

Romola's untruths about continuous and lively conversations on his choreographic plans proceeding nightly between herself and the silent Nijinsky angered and distressed Tamara. Even after her own marriage there were still no comforting concessions to her desire to spend time alone with her father. She was full of fear but was kept as much in the dark as were the press and many friends. All were excluded to sustain Romola's pretence that he spoke only when alone with her. Tamara writes movingly of her disappointment that no real problems of her father's illness were ever broached to her. Indeed Tamara herself became involved in telling lies to support her mother's continual press announcements that her husband was 'almost cured'. He was, she claimed, working on his revolutionary notation for the accurate recording of ballet. After Nijinsky's death in 1950 Romola consoled herself with a project to publish this work and undertook a new odyssey. This simply made her family more concerned than before.

The book is compulsive reading. It tells the story of countless friends, relations and contacts amongst artists and the aristocracy of Europe and Russia. Tamara describes her own life after Nijinsky's death: this itself could form the subject of another book. She has a gift for biography.

BETTY ABEL

BURTON

Snow Upon the Desert. Frank McLynn. John Murray, 1990, 428pp. £19.95.

Richard Burton's life is a delectable pond for the psycho-historian to dabble in and Frank McLynn dives right down as he did with his previous study of

Stanley in Africa. Provided one can steer through great gobbets of Freud, Jung and the Unconscious, which festoon the text, this is an excellent and detailed study of a man who crammed more lives than seem possible into his 69 years. A phenomenon in his own time, Burton epitomised that whole tradition of Englishmen from Byron to Lawrence in love with the Arab world (a world which probably few Arabs would recognise).

The popular image of Burton; the man who got to Mecca, the man who translated the *Arabian Nights* unexpurgated, the man who discovered the source of the Nile, gives only three peaks of a much larger landscape. Born in 1821, in unsettled Regency days, Burton and his brother had a footloose and feckless upbringing, mainly in Europe. This may well have contributed to Richard's 'loner' mentality, but it gave him a better chance than average to recognise his gift for languages and swordsmanship. After a disastrous sojourn at Oxford, Burton got a commission in the Indian Army and sailed in 1842. Seven formative years in the sub-continent gave him an eye for land (his Sind Report), practice in disguise (he was said to be the original of Kipling's character Strickland), and above all his conquest of tongues. He spoke 25 languages and as many dialects by the end of his life and sailed through army exams. Personal feuds cost him the appointment of army interpreter for which he was manifestly the best candidate and he returned to England in 1849 on sick leave with a feeling of failure. But three years in limbo led to his greatest single triumph as adventurer: the penetration in disguise of Mecca, the Holy City, forbidden to Infidels. Ever restless, Burton turned to Africa and achieved two explorations to Somaliland which nearly cost his life in an ambush, and Zanzibar; after that, a brief flit to the Crimea with the bashibazouk irregulars.

It is hard to imagine a suitable wife, if any, for this peripatetic and indeed woman hating Victorian, certainly not the devout Catholic, Isabella Arundell. But she had marked him down in the limbo years, and after some London slum work (she had been refused by Florence Nightingale for the Crimea) she eventually got her man. Thereafter she accepted his conditions of life: Pay, Pack and Follow, not easy in Burton's permanently penniless state. Cross and Crescent never fused but they survived. Isabella eventually burnt all his journals and diaries, still there is more than enough material to portray the man.

There followed now the years of African exploration. These culminating in the race for the Nile sources, seemed to bring out all the worst of jealousy and intrigue in British explorers. Speke, Baker, Grant, Stanley, even the saintly Livingstone became notoriously unchristian. The famous Burton-Speke debate and Speke's death, whether accident or suicide, epitomise the whole unsavoury mess of ambitions. This unedifying dust never really settled, but Burton had to eat and accepted the job of Consul at Fernando Po, a post which increased his love of the Arab world and contempt for the black African, only added to, when he was ordered to end the slave trade and stop human sacrifice in Dahomey, an impossible situation for one man. Burton produced his usual reaction: to turn a cool anthropological eye and to acquire a new tongue. After a brief sojourn in Brazil he was sent to Damascus which should have been a great success. But Burton's unfortunate tendency to be AWOL whenever an interesting journey caught his eye finally snapped the Foreign Office's patience and he was recalled in 1871. (There were other counts against him.) He did get a trip to Iceland before a final and despairing appointment to Trieste, where, both in poor health, they spent a final eleven years. It was here

that Burton's path crossed that of Gordon. Now Governor of Sudan, Gordon offered him the job of Governor of Darfur. Sadly, Burton was bitten by gold fever and preferred an abortive expedition in Egypt and lurched from calamity to catastrophe. Gold in the land of Midian proved elusive.

Burton was finally knighted in 1886 and died in Trieste where his health had steadily declined, in 1891.

This summary of Burton's active life does not begin to consider his achievements as poet, scholar, anthropologist, archaeologist and translator. Isabella burnt his translation of the *Perfumed Garden* but the *Kama Sutra* and the Portuguese *Lusiads* survive. His list of publications is formidable and includes some pioneer classics. Easy to think money would have been a boon; but perhap penury was the greater spur. Money would have meant more expeditions; poverty forced more writing. The explorer was maybe the 'Snow on the Desert' as Omar Khayyam expressed it (ironically cut to size by the invention of the aeroplane). But Burton's words will surely last longer than that 'Little Hour or two'.

MOLLY MORTIMER

SHORTER REVIEWS

Journey to the Gods. (Constable Publishers. £17.95.) The inimitable John Hillaby whose *Journeys* are well known for their originality, by the unexpected tracks and trails he works out and follows, has written of his experiences in backpacking with his wife on a gruelling hike from Athens to Mount Olympus. It is fascinating to read. Even those whose knowledge of Greek mythology is considerable will be surprised at their discoveries, amongst the villages with names dating back to Homer. The descriptions are vivid and witty. Attractive photographs enhance the enjoyment of reading this book.

The Language of Jane Austen. (Macmillan. Hardcover £30, paperback £8.99.) Myra Stokes takes as her exemplar the English language usage of eighteenth century cultivated society. This fresh approach to important writers and their language has two aims. One is to arouse interest in English as it is used in everyday situations at different periods in history through reading a good, durable text. The other is to increase the reader's appreciation and enjoyment of literature as a result of a greater understanding of words and their precise meanings, as they inevitably change through usage. It is an attractive and lively book.

The Dictionary of Contemporary Politics of Central America and the Caribbean. (Routledge. £35.00.) This volume is prepared and edited by Phil Gunson and Greg Chamberlain, with additional material contributed by Andrew Thompson. 'The Caribbean' is here usefully stretched to include Bermuda. The work aims to provide 'a guide to the most important organisations, figures, events and themes in the contemporary politics' of this extensive area. There is bound to be some criticism in a widely controversial field; but it also provides a great deal of valuable and basic material and comment of importance in the understanding of this area. Included are some useful maps of the region.

Dover Thrift Editions. (Constable, 95p each.) One of the most encouraging signs in recent publishing history is a new series called 'Dover Thrift Editions' from Constable. These paperback editions of established classics have readable type and handsome covers. Yet the most remarkable feature is the price: 95 pence. (Even more remarkable is that Dover Books can sell them in the United States for $1.) The titles so far include works as varied as Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven and Other Poems*, and R. B. Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*. The books have a very short introduction giving the basic facts and they also have the occasional footnote to explain an obscure reference or word. It is wonderful that one publisher has realised the need for thrifty editions of great works. They will be a great help not only to students but to a traveller who wants a few slender but readable classics to enlighten a journey.

Florence: A Literary Companion. Francis King is a well-known and talented novelist. At one point he worked for the British Council in Florence and this provides the background for his delightful *Florence: A Literary Companion* (John Murray, £15.95.) This contains well-chosen quotations from a wide variety of writers who have visited or lived in Florence. These range from Mark Twain to Stendhal although most of the authors are English. This is not really a guide book. It is truly a 'companion' in which a cultivated traveller can prepare for a first visit or revive an old pleasure. It would also make a delightful companion to bring to Florence for you can relive Leigh Hunt's walks to Fiesole or Thomas Adolphus Trollope's description of Grand Ducal receptions at the Pitti Palace, where foreign guests emptied dishes of bonbons into their pockets while the Florentine nobility were busily engaged in removing whole hams, chickens and bottles of wine from their sovereign's tables. Thomas Trollope wrote at a time when no intelligent traveller would venture forth without his Murray's guidebook. Books as enjoyable as Francis King's have revived that venerable tradition.

Selected Plays by W. B. Yeats. (Macmillan Papermac. £9.99.) Professor A. Norman Jeffares has for many years contributed many works that have enlarged our enjoyment of Anglo-Irish literature. Macmillan paperbacks are now issuing an expanded edition of *Selected Plays* by W. B. Yeats edited with a lucid introduction by Professor Jeffares. This includes a dozen plays covering the first four decades of this century. These plays provide a deeper understanding not only of Yeats' great poetry, but also some valuable insights into that most vexed of contemporary topics, Irish nationalism.

Adopting or Fostering a Sexually Abused Child. (Batsford. Child Care Policy and Practice Series. £9.95. Paperback.) Catherine Macaskill has written a detailed account of funded and supervised research carried out by herself and colleagues on a truly difficult problem. Her chief sources of information were reports and confidential interviews with the children and their adoptive parents, separately conducted. These children were those who had already been taken into care, after social workers and magistrates had reluctantly concluded that the bitter experiences of sexual abuse warranted their removal from home into a substitute family. However careful and caring the professional workers are, the child's feelings are unfathomable and may result in a subsequent inability to form relationships later in life. The book is both enlightening and saddening. It deals with the principles and practice on which, it is agreed, help may best be based.

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Contents

		Page
The Seeds of Time: Scientists and the Public	Peter Hodgson	57
Poem: Of Time and Tides	Sandra Macaluso	67
The Swiss Saga	Leo Muray	68
Czech Students and Revolutionary Politics	Piers Benn	72
The Narmada Valley Project: Economic Miracle or Environmental Disaster?	B. Seshadri	75
Japanese-American Trade Rivalry	Ian Christopher	80
The Future of the American Metropolis	Marvin Goldwert	82
Road to Rot: The New 'Oxford English Dictionary'	A. D. Harvey	84
Sartre: Beau-Idéal of a Left Intellectual	A. L. Rowse	87
The Longest War	Molly Mortimer	91
Fauvism and the Supremacy of Colour	Muriel Julius	93
Exhibiting a Massive Monarch	Anthony Gross	98
Cinema: A Quarterly Review	David Shipman	102
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT		105
Esmond Wright, Molly Mortimer, Leo Muray, Tony Bridge, Betty Abel.		
Shorter Reviews		111

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THE SEEDS OF TIME: SCIENTISTS AND THE PUBLIC

by Peter Hodgson

> If you can look into the seeds of time
> And say which grains will grow and which will not
> Speak then to me, who neither begs nor fears
> Your favours nor your hate.
>
> Macbeth.

ONE day in 1940, when Britain was alone facing Nazi Germany, two scientists in Birmingham were covering sheets of paper with their calculations. One was a German, Rudolf Peierls, and the other an Austrian, Otto Frisch. Both were refugees from Germany, and both were very well-informed nuclear physicists.

They knew about the work of the Italian Enrico Fermi, who had bombarded many chemical elements with neutrons to see what would happen. In particular, he wanted to know if he could make nuclei even heavier than the heaviest known nucleus, uranium. The results of this particular experiment were very puzzling. Two German chemists, Hahn and Strassmann had analysed the substances formed by bombarding uranium with neutrons, and it seemed to contain a material that behaved just like a much lighter nucleus, barium. In the end they concluded it must actually be barium. But what had happened to produce it?

This result was studied by Otto Frisch and his aunt Lise Meitner, one of the pioneers of nuclear physics. They suddenly realised what must have happened: after capturing the neutron the uranium must have broken up into two roughly equal pieces, one of which was barium. They called this process fission.

The news of this discovery soon spread, and many more experiments were made. Scientists found that the fission process produced a large amount of energy and, still more important, that two or three more neutrons were emitted from each fissioning uranium nucleus. This was important because it immediately opened up the possibility of a chain reaction. The neutrons emitted from one fission could cause two or three more fissions, and so on until millions of uranium nucleus had fissioned, with enormous release of energy. If this process could be controlled it would be a powerful source of energy for civil use. If it took place suddenly it would produce a weapon of unimaginable power.

What interested Peierls and Frisch on that fateful day in Birmingham

was how big the piece of uranium had to be for such an explosion. If the piece was too small, so many neutrons would escape from the surface of the uranium that there would not be enough left to start the chain reaction. If it was too large then it would be difficult to make and could not form a practicable weapon.

They finished their calculations and came up with the answer: an explosive chain reaction could take place in a piece of uranium weighing a few kilograms. The atomic bomb was practicable.

They immediately drafted a Memorandum for the British Government outlining in some detail the likely consequences of this discovery. They pointed out that the atomic bomb would explode with the force of thousands of tons of dynamite, and they drew attention to the severe radioactive hazards. The implications were obvious: the existence of a weapon of such power would transform the nature of warfare and overshadow international relations. On the positive side, if uranium fission could be harnessed it would provide a new source of power for civil use.

This story is instructive for several reasons. It shows that sometimes scientists can tell us things that are important for the future development of human society. What they tell us is sometimes very surprising and not easy to accept. But it is often true.

Another illustration came soon after the war had ended. By then the atomic bombs had been dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and all the world knew about the power of atomic bombs. The American Government alone knew how to make them, and the leaders thought that if only they could keep the secret from falling into the hands of the Soviets, then American superiority could be maintained almost indefinitely.

The scientists however knew that there were many very competent Soviet scientists, and that they could easily find out how to make an atomic bomb for themselves. They estimated that it would take them about five years. This estimate proved very accurate; the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb in 1949.

The Lucky Dragon

Another illustration of the ability of scientists to draw momentous conclusions from data generally available is provided by the story of the Lucky Dragon, a Japanese fishing boat. The radioactive debris from the hydrogen bomb test explosion in 1954 was scattered over a large area of the Pacific, and some of it fell on the *Fukuryu Maru*, or Lucky Dragon. The crew noticed the whitish powder that fell on the boat, and about three days later they found that those parts of their skins that had touched the powder became dark red and began to swell up like a burn. The Lucky Dragon returned to port, and the crew told the press about their experiences. Professor Yasushi Nishiwaki, a professor of radiation biophysics at Osaka City University School of Medicine, read the report in a newspaper and was then asked by the Public Health Department of Osaka to examine some of the tuna fish brought back by the Lucky Dragon. He found that they were highly radioactive, and was able to establish the

presence of a range of fission products in some dust that he found on the boat itself.

Professor Nishiwaki wrote a detailed article on his findings that was published in the *Atomic Scientists' Journal* for November 1954, when I was the editor. These findings were analyzed by Professor Rotblat, a physicist working at St Bartholemew's Hospital in London. He found that there was a much greater quantity of fission products on the boat than would be the case if the fission reaction was only used to detonate the hydrogen. Indeed he found that 'fission accounts for most of the energy released by the hydrogen bomb'. This was contrary to the general belief at the time that a fission bomb simply served as a detonator to ignite the much more powerful hydrogen reaction. He then realised that the mechanism of the bomb was rather more complicated: there was an additional third stage composed of a shell of uranium 238. This shell serves the double purpose of holding the reacting mass together for a short time longer, thus increasing the explosive power, and far more importantly of boosting the power still further by the extra fissions caused in the uranium 238 by the fast neutrons from the hydrogen reaction. Since the energy per fission is about 200 Mev, and that from the three fusion reactions 4.3, 3.0 and 17.7 Mev, it is easy to see that most of the explosive power of such a device comes from fission and not from fusion.

This was a startling conclusion, and shows how an academic scientist, by reasoning from published data, can reach conclusions about matters that are considered most secret by the authorities. Professor Rotblat wrote an article on his work and it was published in the *Atomic Scientists' Journal* for March 1955. I do not recall any hesitations about this, though it was obviously not popular with the authorities. It seemed to us to be our duty to make this knowledge generally available.

Since then the general attitude of the public to scientists has developed in a rather curious way. On the one hand scientists are expected to produce a whole series of marvels to satisfy any conceivable need. On the other hand scientists are seldom listened to when they try to explain just what they can and cannot do. The result is that people get angry with scientists for not producing the goods they want and blame them when things go wrong.

The Seeds of Time

The story of Peierls and Frisch shows why scientists should be listened to. They have studied the inner workings of the world and know something about the law of nature. This sometimes enables them to say what is likely to prove possible in the near future. They 'can look into the seeds of time, and say which grains will grow and which will not'. This should of course be firmly qualified: scientists are human and can make mistakes, and the range of their vision into the future is strictly limited. Nevertheless, even allowing for those necessary qualifications it still remains true that they are often able to see much more clearly than those who know nothing about science and the inner workings of the world.

The essence of the matter is thus exceedingly simple: The first consid-

eration is that in our modern society we are increasingly dependent on a wide range of scientific and technological devices. Our transport, our communications, our sources of power and a large part of our manufacturing industries are the direct results of the application of scientific discoveries that have been made relatively recently. Our civilisation is quite different from any other civilisation that has ever existed on the earth, and that is the result of science and technology. This process will continue at an ever-increasing rate.

The second consideration is that all this is due to the work of scientists, and they have been able to do this because they have attained some understanding of the inner workings of the material world. As a result, they understand some of the principles on which are based the new devices that will affect our lives far into the next century.

From this it follows, thirdly, that when politicians make decisions affecting the future of our society, as they do almost every day, they should listen to what the scientists have to say, and take it into account when deciding what to do. If they do not, then they are very likely to make decisions contrary to the reality of nature. It is possible to ignore realities for a while, but in the end disaster follows, and the extent of the disaster is the greater if realities have been ignored for a long time.

Once again it is important to note the qualification. In their deliberations politicians have to consider not only the scientific factors, but also a whole range of human considerations. The scientific facts do not dictate what the politicians should do: they mark out the limits of responsible decisions. Scientists often know reasonably well what are the limits of the main areas into which policy divisions fall: the areas of impracticability, of possibility and of practicality. Wherever possible, decisions should lie in the area of practicability, and this often is very wide and leaves much scope for discussions in which scientists as scientists have little to contribute. If however the discussion moves into the area of possibility, then there are serious uncertainties that should be carefully discussed. Finally, to make a decision in the area of impracticability is to court disaster.

All this must sound quite obvious commonsense. Who in his right mind would try to fly an aeroplane without first finding out from an expert how to fly it and what are the limits of its performance? And yet again and again one finds public leaders doing what amounts to just the same sort of thing.

The reasons for this apparently stupid behaviour are often rather complicated, and are not always easy for the scientist to understand. One of the reasons is that it is rather easy to assume that one understands a subject when in fact one does not. One of the side effects of scientific education in schools and of popular science writings is that people get the impression that they know all about science. Such writings inevitably simplify, and the real world is seldom as simple. Politicians like to appear to know everything, and always assiduously cultivate verbal facility, so that they can talk their way into and out of almost everything. If the public appears to want something, then they are the ones to provide it. The public in turn

is often manipulated by the media into a fairy land of unrealistic expectations, and the stage is set for disaster. It requires a very strong-minded politician to tell the public that what it wants is just fantasy and that they had better wake up and face the truth. Much more frequently, politicians ooze confident optimism about a happy and prosperous future and their ability to bring it about. Scientists tend to be much more critical, and always want to inject a lot of tiresome and boring qualifications. Politicians often think that they understand it all quite well, and have no time to spend listening to the scientists. No wonder scientists are pushed into the sidelines.

Another probably more important reason why the scientists are often kept out of public discussions is that decisions are often very strongly influenced by purely political considerations that have nothing to do with the scientific and technological realities. When the scientist then comes along with his comments, he is simply obstructing what the politicians want to do, and so is more of a nuisance than an asset.

As an example of this suppose, as is the case in most countries, that there is a Government in power and an opposition that of course wants to destroy that Government. One of the ways of bringing down the Government is by a strike in one of the powerful industries. Three of these in Britain are the coal miners, the dockers and the railwaymen. In the last few decades the power of the dockers has been much reduced by the development of container ships, whose cargoes can be easily loaded onto large trucks. Furthermore, the power of the railwaymen has similarly been eroded by the development of road transport. That leaves the coal miners, and indeed it was the power of the coal miners that brought down the Government of Mr. Heath.

But now the power of the coal miners is also being eroded by the development of nuclear power. And indeed it was the nuclear power stations, running at full power, that were a major factor in preventing the coal miners from bringing down the Government of Mrs. Thatcher. And so very naturally the opposition politicians hate nuclear power, and ceaselessly say that they will abolish it as soon as they are able to do so. They find it easy to be convinced by all the writings against nuclear power that this is the right thing to do. In such a climate the views of a scientist who wants a careful analysis of the various possible sources of power are of no interest whatever. In fact they pose a dangerous threat to their political aims.

Another potent factor is the power of the media to mould public opinion. In democratic countries politicians are very responsive to public opinion, as they know full well that if they go against it they are very likely to lose the next election. They may indeed have their scientific advisors who tell them the truth about their policies, but they are understandably very reluctant to court unpopularity.

This already complicated situation is made worse by the presence of scientists who are willing to set themselves up as experts and to write in a very plausible way against the general view of experienced scientific opinion.

They usually know enough to present their case in a way that seems very convincing to the non-scientist. So if a politician wants, for his own reasons, to pursue a certain policy, he can always find a few scientists who will support him with an apparently good scientific case. It is only other scientists who can expose him for the fraud that he is.

The scientist is committed to the search for the truth about the world. This search is difficult, but in the end the scientist does achieve some genuine knowledge. So if he is to be discredited, then doubt must be thrown on the very process of scientific investigation. Several trendy philosophies come in handy here. There are for example various forms of subjectivism that say that all the scientist can do is to find a convenient way of connecting together the various observations he makes. According to this view, science is just a shorthand for what we observe, and all talk of genuine knowledge of the real world is meaningless and forever beyond our ken. Science is something that we construct for ourselves, not objective truth. So if a scientist makes some statement about the world it can be dismissed as the product of his upbringing or his implicit support of the prevailing industrial-military complex. Against all this it has to be emphasised that despite his fallibility and despite the difficulties of scientific research, nevertheless the scientist does often manage to achieve a genuine though partial knowledge of the world. This cannot be brushed aside. It is not the product of the scientist's mind alone. The scientist knows that through his work he is in contact with an objective reality that can be recognised, and that we ignore this knowledge at our peril.

Alternative Energy Sources

All this can be illustrated by many examples, and this can be done with particular clarity by referring to the current debates about the best energy sources to use. There have been many studies of future world energy needs, and it is now certain that the demand is outrunning the supply, and that the situation will become progressively worse in the future. This is due to a combination of two factors: the steady increase of the world population and the expectations for a continually rising standard of living. We may of course reasonably say that we should do what we can to stabilise the population of the world, and that we should be willing for the common good to accept a somewhat lower living standard. These are admirable sentiments, and should be put into practice whenever possible, but experience shows that they would be difficult to implement, and so it is extremely unlikely that the world's energy problems could be solved in this way.

So we need more energy. Where is it to come from? There are many possible sources, both old and new: wood, coal, oil, hydro, nuclear, wind, wave, solar, tidal, geothermal and so on. We need them all, wherever they are practicable. This means that they must be able to supply power at a reasonable cost, safely and without adversely affecting the environment. This is a complicated problem that has to be tackled for each country in the light of its own natural resources.

It is common knowledge that the world's oil is fast running out, and coal is polluting, and most of the other sources are relatively small-scale. So

opponents of nuclear power are strongly in favour of what are called 'the benign renewables'. These are primarily wind, solar, tidal and wave power. They are renewable in that they do not use up resources on the earth and so are essentially inexhaustible. However analysis of their capabilities shows that they are not able to supply power reliably, are very probably more expensive than other sources, are relatively dangerous and frequently have strong adverse effects on the environment.

In reply to this their advocates say that these problems can be solved by more research. This is one of the widespread beliefs about science: that if you provide enough money every problem can be solved. This attitude may be encouraged by scientists who want support for their own projects, or by politicians who want a particular project to succeed, but unfortunately it is not true. All projects are limited by the laws of nature, and in the case of the renewables the basic trouble is that the energy is spread out very thinly and has to be collected before it is of any use. The collectors are very large structures and this makes them costly. Coal and oil are efficient sources of power because the energy is very concentrated, and the same is true even even more strikingly for nuclear power. Hydroelectric power is good because the valley does the concentrating for us; unfortunately there are not enough valleys for this to provide more than a small fraction of the world's power. Another disadvantage of the renewable is that they are intermittent; what can one do when the wind drops or the sun goes down? Tidal and wave power are somewhat better in this respect, but they are also very variable with time.

Nuclear Power

When it comes to nuclear power, exactly the opposite arguments are used. Nuclear reactors produce relatively small quantities of highly radioactive nuclear waste. This is a problem, but one that is relatively easy to solve. After removal from the reactor, the waste is stored in large tanks for a few decades until most of the radioactivity has decayed away, and then fused with glass to make it insoluble and encased in stainless steel and buried deep in the earth. All this has been well understood for a long time. Nevertheless it is repeated over and over again that the disposal of nuclear waste is one of the great unsolved problems of the century. Gone is the confidence that scientists can solve all problems. Indeed this is actually a problem that has been solved, and yet this is not believed, because this would remove one of their arguments against nuclear power.

Thus scientists are expected to perform marvels against the laws of nature to make the renewables economic, but are not believed at all when they say that they have solved the problem of the disposal of nuclear waste.

Part of the problem is that the public wants a source of power that is cheap, perfectly safe and harmless to the environment. Scientists have to say that this is unfortunately just not possible. Absolute safety is impossible. There is always some danger associated with any human activity. Of course we must do all we can to reduce the hazards to a reasonable level, but they cannot be eliminated entirely. It is in fact harmful if the drive for safety were to be pushed too far, as it may have been in the

case of nuclear power. Safety measures are very costly, and so we must always think whether the money we spend on safety in one area of human activity could perhaps save more lives if spent in another way.

As an example of this, very large sums are now spent removing traces of radioactivity from the outlets of reprocessing plants. The very same money could do far more good in saving lives if it were used for example to improve crash barriers on the motorways. It would be good to do both, but in fact the amount of public money available for such purposes is always limited, so a choice has to be made. Thus scientists have to say that certain safety measures are in fact causing more injuries and deaths than they are saving, and this is of course not at all popular.

Cold Fusion

The longing for a cheap and safe source of power came dramatically to the surface last year when it was announced that two chemists had succeeded in producing power by fusing deuterium in a very small device about the size of a coffee pot. This was instant news because deuterium is present in ordinary water, and so provides an essentially unlimited source of power if we could find out a way to fuse the deuterium nuclei together. It is also generally believed that fusion power has none of the problems of disposing of radioactivity that are associated with fission power, although unfortunately that belief is not quite correct. If fusion had indeed been achieved, it was a discovery of the highest importance for the future of mankind.

Physicists have been working for decades on the problem of fusion, and have constructed many large devices in which some fusion does take place. Many of the problems have now been solved, and it is hoped that the next generation of machines will indeed achieve fusion in a sustained and controllable way. It was thus very startling to read that two chemists had solved the problem so simply, and many glowing articles in the media publicised this great advance.

Physicists were very sceptical because they just could not understand how this fusion reaction could happen. It seemed to go against established theories. So much the worse for your theories, said the chemists: if it happens then it happens and you will have to modify your theories.

The excitement was intense, and all over the world scientists hastily built copies of the original apparatus and tried to reproduce the results. Some thought that they had succeeded, and soon there were more reports in the media about the confirmation of the first claims. It was however noticeable that it was, on the whole, the smaller and less well-known centres that found this confirmation. The large and prestigious laboratories were silent, because they were doing their experiments very carefully and did not want to make any premature pronouncement.

There followed a period of uncertainty with many conflicting claims. Then Los Alamos announced that they could not find the effect, followed by Harwell in England. Other laboratories withdrew their claims, and soon it was all over.

It may well be asked why the two chemists did not take more care to

verify their results before making their announcement. This is a fair question, but it is well to realise the pressures under which scientists are often working. There is of course the fear that someone else will get there first. There are many cases in the history of science where a careful scientist who checked and rechecked his work was beaten to the post by one less cautious. Just when do you decide that you have established your result beyond all reasonable doubt? This is not at all an easy question.

Another consideration is that scientists are dependent on grants for the continuation of their research. Suppose they made what they think might be a discovery just before their application for a renewal of their grant is to be decided. Should they withhold news of what may be a very great achievement which would justify the continuation of their research? Or should they hold it back and risk rejection? And if they do mention it in their report, then surely it will not remain secret for long and will become common knowledge. It is not clear to what extent these considerations were operative in the case of cold fusion, so these remarks are purely general.

Much of the trouble would not arise if scientists could get on with their own work without being subjected to the publicity of the media. Unfortunately this is not possible any more, nor is it really desirable, since the latest results of science often concern us all. What is necessary is a greater sense of responsibility and caution, but this is asking much of an industry that thrives on sensation.

Radiation Hazards

A subject that is frequently given prominent attention in the media is the hazards of nuclear radiation. It is very often stated that studies have shown an increased incidence of leukaemia in people living near nuclear installations. If true, this would be extremely serious, and would be a powerful argument against nuclear power.

Scientists tend to react to such stories with extreme caution, for several reasons. In the first place the numbers of people affected are usually very small, and so the case rests on statistical arguments. Scientists, especially those who make experiments, know very well how careful one has to be when trying to draw conclusions from a rather small number of cases.

An even stronger reason for caution is that the level of additional radioactivity in the region surrounding nuclear plants is extremely small. It can easily be measured to high accuracy, so there is no doubt about that. If there was no other radiation around the amount of radioactivity would not be important; one would just conclude that even a small amount of radioactivity can cause leukaemia. However this is not the case. We are all being irradiated all the time by radioactive materials in our own bodies, by the cosmic radiation and by radioactive materials in the soil and in our houses. This is what is called the natural background radiation. It is physically the same as that from nuclear plants. This radiation does not obviously do much harm, though it may be responsible for a small number of cases of cancer. This being so, it is impossible to understand how a very small addition to the natural radiation could have a detectable

effect.

This argument is reinforced when we reflect that the background radiation varies from place to place, very often by factors of two or more. In some places it is up to twenty times the average value, and even there no detectable numbers of extra cases of cancer are found. It is thus not possible to understand how the very small extra amounts around nuclear installations could have any detectable effects at all.

It is still of course necessary to explain the observed numbers of extra cases, where this seems to be established statistically. Several possible explanations have been proposed. For example, it has been suggested that it is a virus effect that occurs when a new population moves into a rather remote community, which often happens when nuclear installations are built. Studies of similar communities that have received such an influx of population but have no nuclear installation also show an increased number of leukaemia cases, which supports this explanation. This received, however, very little publicity in the media.

Chernobyl Dust

Another example occurred last year, when it was reported that the dust from the Chernobyl disaster caused a large increase in the death rate in certain areas in the United States. To scientists this was very unlikely for the reason given above. Furthermore, much more dust was deposited in Europe, and so one would expect a much greater increase in the death rate, which was not found.

Nevertheless the report was supported by impressive statistical evidence. Data was presented on the death rate and the amount of Chernobyl dust deposited, and there was a definite correlation between the two. It seemed very likely that there was something wrong with these results, but from the information in the Press it was not possible to say what it was.

Since this was an important matter that had received great prominence in the Press, I tried to find out the more detailed results on which the report was based. When these were available it immediately became clear that the results had been grouped so as to produce the effect claimed, and that when looked at objectively there was no positive evidence at all. This took some weeks to find out, and by then the newspaper in which the report was published was not interested in publishing an explanation. Thus the public had its beliefs in the malign effects of very small amounts of nuclear radiations reinforced once more.

The Social Responsibilities of Scientists

It is the constant experience of scientists with a sense of social responsibility who try to play their part in informing the public that there are really very few people who are interested in what we have to say. The politicians are certainly not interested; they have their minds made up about what they want to do and the scientists could only cause confusion. The newspapers and the media in general are not interested because what they want is sensation, and what the scientist has to say is usually so full of boring numbers and hedged about with qualifications that it is practically unreadable. If they do invite a scientist to write an article, then inevitably

it is followed in subsequent issues by a shoal of letters contradicting everything he has tried to say, and usually the editor is not interested in publishing the scientist's rebuttal. If he appears in a television programme he will frequently find that his contribution has been edited away to such brevity as to be useless, or even that he is made to appear to say the opposite of what he really said.

All this, needless to say, is very unsatisfactory, and indeed is a serious danger to our society. It means that very often we are choosing courses of action that have within them the seeds of disaster. They may remain hidden for a while, but when they do become apparent, it will be too late to do anything about it.

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POEM

OF TIME AND TIDES

Since there's an ocean between us
Our hearts must learn to swim,
And sail the seas without a fuss,
So time and tides are but a whim.

We must brave the waves that distance brings
And hug the shores our friendship's found,
Where love sets sail and thoughts have wings,
Till we meet again on solid ground.

Though miles of ocean may keep us apart
And the years pass by like ships at sea,
Distance cannot deny what's deep in the heart
And time cannot part such friends as we.

Sandra Macaluso.

THE SWISS SAGA

by Leo Murray

ON August 1st, 1291, the leaders of the inhabitants of Schwyz, Uri and Unterwalden, the three Ur-Cantone, as they are called, in the heart of what is now Switzerland, met on a hilltop, the Ruetli, and swore an oath of everlasting identity and independence. They were, of course, still in the middle of the Holy Roman Empire and their oath was aimed at a Swiss noble family of the Canton of Argau, the Hapsburgs of Hawkes Castle. It took centuries until the identity of Switzerland was recognized at the 1815 Congress of Vienna. By then, of course, many valleys, that is Cantons, had joined in many a bitter conflict. As late as 1847 there was a brief and confused Civil War, the Sonderbund Krieg.

By then the divisions between the Cantons, between Catholic and Protestant-Calvinist, between French and Italian speaking Cantons and those with their own German tongue had been made permanent and accepted. An essential but rarely recognized feature is that the German speaking Cantons each have their own distinct language, or dialect if you like, which can be compared to Lowlands, not Gaelic. Only the printed language is High German. Lately, interestingly, German speaking Swiss are returning to their old language even in the big cities. It is seen as a reaction to external pressure to fall in with the European Community.

The pressure on the Swiss in the late Middle Ages and right to the Napoleonic Wars had been tremendous. The Pikemen of the old Cantons fought as mercenaries in many wars, defeating the Austrians and the French. They had a chance of seizing control of Lombardy but did not take it. Their struggle was to establish a national identity that welded together ethnic groups of the neighbouring nations. What helped them greatly and is sometimes ignored was the absence of modern communications. Outside the few main roads the communities in the Cantons could preserve their identity. The Swiss have succeeded in establishing and maintaining their national identity while preserving an ethnic identity. There is no Swiss nationality as such. All citizens of every Canton are automatically Swiss nationals and you cannot be a Swiss National unless you are the citizen of a Canton. That applies to nationalization as well.

The Swiss have always been on the alert to sustain their identity and they are now under pressure. There are 23 Cantons and three are divided in two which makes 26. There are 6.7 million inhabitants of whom 44.3% are Protestant and 47.6% Catholic. But now 5% of the population are foreigners, Spanish, Greek, Yugoslav, and Turks. The population is aging according to the latest figures, with a growth rate of 0.8%. The under 15 year olds make up 16.8% of the population compared with 23.5% ten years ago while the over 65 number 14.4% compared with 10.2%. The fertility rate has fallen from a low 2% to 1.5%. In the year 2000, it is estimated by the OECD, the 15 to 64 population will be 4.4 million and those above 64 will be 1.1 million.

Discreetly, the Swiss authorities have accepted that in view of these population trends the country will have to continue to rely on immigrant workers who make up around 20% of the labour force. The children of immigrants have to adjust to an intensive and varied system of education. There is also the issue of women's education and training. The rate of women in the overall Labour Force has remained static at 52% in the past 20 years unlike that in other industrial countries and the wages of those employed are around a third less than that of men. One result due to population trends is a shortage of skills in quite a few sectors. Hence the strike of women in June, an event without precedent. Education is a matter for the Cantons and until lately there were considerable differences. Only in 1970 general regulations for the specially evolved system of 'apprenticeship education' was laid down that combines obligatory secondary education with appenticeship courses. There are seven universities.

This must be seen against the unique Swiss Constitution. There are three official languages, Italian for the Ticino Canton, French for six Cantons, Geneva being one of them, and the German languages for the others. The famous Canton of Grisons has its own preserved ancient Romansh language but it is not an 'official' language. The Swiss Constitution leaves every right and competence, not specially listed as belonging to the Federal Authority, to the Cantons. Education is one of them.

There is a National Council of 200 members, elected now by proportional representation, and a States Council, something like an Upper House, of 46 members, two from each Canton, like the US Senate. These jointly elect the seven member Federal Council with a rotating chairman. It runs the administration and all Cantons take their turn with one member.

But at least two of the 'Seven' must be French and Italian. There are elections every four years in October. There is no Head of Government. The main Swiss parties are the Catholic Conservatives, the Radical Democrats, the Social Democrats and a Farmers and Middle Class Party. Their strength remains roughly the same with Social Democrats and Radical Democrats — basically a Conservative but not Right Wing Party — being the strongest. On the Federal level there is always a sort of Coalition. The real political struggle is in the Cantons. This because the 1872 Constitution lays down: 'The Cantons shall exercize all rights which are not expressly delegated to the Federal Authority'.

There has always been a struggle for influence on policy making between the Cantons and also between regions, French speaking Switzerland and Ticino, North West Switzerland, led by the powerful Canton of Berne where the Federal capital is, Central Switzerland and Eastern Switzerland. There has always been tension and competition between the powerful industrial and banking centres of Basle, Berne and Zurich and the equally important French speaking centres of Geneva and Lucerne and also a parallel struggle with the old Cantons in the heart of the mountains. The reason, as in the US, is that small Cantons like, for example Appenzell Nidwalden, have the same vote weight as Zurich in the States Council. This is also why it took so long to get the vote for women. The federal

vote came after the last war but every Canton had to decide to give the vote to its own women in Cantonal voting. It took years. Switzerland is a democracy but the majority is determinedly Conservative.

As an economic entity Switzerland has been outstandingly successful. It has no resources except hydro-electric power and some timber. From the late Middle Ages it has concentrated on export; first its Pikemen and then its cattle and cheeses. Then, at a critical moment 150 years ago, it started its own home industry, watchmaking. To mention one arresting figure; in 1918 the Swiss sold abroad four million gold watch cases. Right from the beginning of the industrial age the Swiss knew that they had to create and build up advanced industry for export. Their industries are streamlined. The Gross Domestic Product in 1990 was 223.4 billion dollars and 23.3 went into National Savings. Imports amounted to 58.2 billion dollars and exports to 56.5. 12.6 million tourists spent 4.953 billion dollars.

The total workforce is 3,535,000 of whom 58,100 are women according to the latest count. Unemployment amounted to 0.5%! Only 5.6% are employed in agriculture in which, of course, cheese making is best known. Industry employs 35.1%, more than in the UK, and the Services 59.3%. In the Services banking is prominent with over 10% of the workforce. The pharmaceutical industry is particularly strong and the armaments industry is also a significant sector in the export trade with well-known products like the Oerlikon guns for instance.

The Swiss have been rather careful in their foreign policy after the Vienna Congress of 1815 guaranteed their permanent neutrality. The Swiss Confederation, the official name, survived because of the constant struggles between the major powers — France, Austria and later Germany and Italy, resigned themselves to accepting a balance of strategic risks. Swiss neutrality ensured that its exports could go anywhere. It ensured also that bank deposits there were safe and so were offices of international companies.

Again, the limited, strictly defined powers of the Federal Authorities and the liberal Conservatism of the Middle Classes encouraged investment. After the outstanding contribution of Jean Jacques Rousseau to European thinking at the time of the French Revolution, the Swiss made only a limited impact with Pestalozzi, the pioneer in child education, and 150 years later with Jung, the Psychologist, the rival of Sigmund Freud. Indeed, Switzerland's most dramatic contribution on the international scene was the founding of the International Red Cross by Dupont in 1859, after the battle of Solferino in Napoleon III's war against Austria. The International Red Cross remains an influential organization which is run as carefully as Swiss foreign policy. It knew much about the holocaust, for instance, but kept quiet. Switzerland was surrounded by Nazi-German controlled territories in the last war. The German, and to a less degree the French border, are considered sensitive. An illustration of this was the refusal to accept the extreme Western Province of Austria, Vorarlberg, as an additional Canton. After the First War a referendum was passed there appealing to Switzerland to be allowed to join. Also, the carefully preserved balance between the ethnic groups must not be disturbed.

Switzerland has refused to join the UN, but it is a member of international organizations concerned with commerce like OECD. A Swiss is Secretary of GATT, the trade organization in which the big battles over trade concessions are being fought out. The first step, however, towards a political alignment was taken by joining EFTA, the European Free Trade Association founded by Britain in 1959. Britain, of course, left EFTA in 1973 to join the EC. Switzerland was successful in getting the UN to place some of its subsidiary organization in Geneva, that had served as the meeting place of the League of Nations of the inter-war period abandoned during World War II. Since then Geneva has become a favourite meeting place for diplomats and government members of all countries.

However, at its 700th anniversary Switzerland is facing a new situation that brings it back to the troubles and risks of its start, the prospect of a European Union.

With Austria and Sweden, key members of EFTA like Switzerland, now determined to join the EC and this with the prospect of some form of European Federation in the offing, membership of that Union has become a live political issue in Switzerland. The French and Italian speaking Cantons and sizeable groups of businessmen and intellectuals are supporting the suggestion while the old-fashioned German speaking Cantons harbour their doubts and uncertainties. The Swiss bankers, in particular, are not at all sure. In the Swiss Bond Market deals in the Ecu bonds of the EC have suddenly increased with Switzerland becoming, quite unofficially, of course, an indirect member of the ERM, the Brussels Exchange Rate Mechanism dominated by the Deutschmark, a body of which the UK is a new and very uneasy member.

Discreetly, the Swiss bankers are anxious to find out how they should react to a Single European Currency and a European Central Bank. Switzerland is firmly established in the EC market at present, especially in banking, insurance, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and special foods like the famous Swiss chocolates. At present 57% of its exports go to the EC and 71% of its imports come from there.

Switzerland is a Confederation and not a Union. Its identity rests on a balance between ethnic groups and on the rights of the Cantons. But there is an additional crucial factor in its Constitution: the Referendum. Federal laws and taxes are submitted to referenda for adoption or rejection. Eight Cantons or 30,000 citizens throughout the country can obtain it. One example will suffice. The introduction of VAT has been rejected three times. One has to compare this with the increase in British VAT by a simple order. And again, 50,000 citizens can demand a change in the Constitution to be considered.

It is easy to see that the Swiss will have to make sweeping changes that are bound to alter the whole character of the Federation and the Cantons if they were to decide to join. There is another vital matter too. Membership means freedom of all subjects of all member countries to settle everywhere. Because of their history the Swiss have always been anxious and keenly determined to preserve their unique identity.

CZECH STUDENTS AND REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS

by Piers Benn

EASTERN Europe is beginning to go out of fashion. Only just over a year ago, we watched from our armchairs as communist regime after communist regime collapsed before our eyes, to the hopeful and happy singing of idealistic young students, whilst the travel pages of the middle class newspapers began to beckon us to Prague, Budapest and Berlin. We were struck by the youthfulness of those who showed their old masters the door — particularly in East Germany, where idealistic teenagers earnestly explained, in impeccable English, why they were leaving their motherland, and in Czechoslovakia, where optimistic students led the early protests with candles and anthems. Then, in imperceptible stages, it became old hat. There seemed gradually less and less to say about what had happened, except to tell the new leaders to get on with their jobs. Slowly emptied of journalists and hangers-on, East-central Europe was left to manage its own affairs.

What has become of the young idealists who led the way? In Prague, at least, they are alive but not kicking. Having organised a joint British-Czech Philosophy seminar — this one, unlike previous ones, not disrupted by the police, I found some of the original organisers and participants of the famous November 17th demonstration eager to inform, discuss and even unburden themselves on their new visitors. In a country where freedom of expression and travel were granted almost overnight, how content do they feel now? Prices are rising; most services are still owned by the state, and subsidies for the arts previously taken for granted are being taken away. Drugs and crime are now talked about openly, and are an increasing problem. News-stands on metro stations are becoming stuffed with pornography — not pruriently put on a 'top shelf' but simply mixed up with sundry publications. The fare for the excellent public transport in Prague has just increased four-fold and we shall have to wait to see whether the clean and marvellously efficient metro service will be swamped by the litter and muggings that, together with the criminal fares, characterise the London underground. A lecturer at the Prague School of Economics told me that she was now poorer than before the revolution and that many Czechs, hoping that the changes would make them rich, are bitterly disappointed. Many feel that their new-found freedom of travel is meaningless without the means to pay for it, and perhaps that their freedom of speech is less exciting now that the hated communists are nowhere to be found.

That the period of honeymoon should end is, of course, inevitable. Naturally, no one weeps for the old system, as the erstwhile pillars of that system will anxiously tell you themselves. But what about those happy, idealistic students who set the process in motion? For them, the period of nostalgia is just setting in. Hearing of our British trip, representatives of the old student movement hastened to the Prague School of Economics

to reminisce to us. Only half aware that the story of November 17th 1989 is ancient history in Britain as well as Czechoslovakia, two of the original participants, Josef Moural and Miroslav Singer, gave us a long, detailed and reverential account of the time.

The essential details are well known. For a variety of reasons, the students were not prevented from demonstrating on the fateful day — even posters and loudspeakers were allowed. They told us that it was largely the events in East Germany that shamed them into activity, together with their conviction that the police would not contemplate violence on the fiftieth anniversary of the murder of a student by the Nazis. 'Who, if not we? When, if not now?' was the slogan that carried the day. But even in the midst of this, there are stories of cynicism: some students, according to their colleagues, joined the movement because they simply wanted to be important, or had failed to advance their careers in the official student organisations. And a haze of uncertainty and speculation still hovers over the role of the secret police in the timing and venue of the demonstration, and the faking of the death of one student.

Most revealing about our meeting with those who were briefly on the vanguard of change, however, was their account of the internal divisions among the student movement, and its strained relations with Civic Forum. The latter was formed two days after the 'massacre' of the 17th — a term of self-conscious hyperbole to describe the activities of the police. In the early stages, the student movement went in for restless organisation, often holding meetings until the small hours to direct the course of the changes. It was the students who, so they proudly relate, dissuaded Civic Forum from accepting the 'reform' leadership of Ladislav Adamec. In their meetings, organisation and informal command structure, they were an enviable model for would-be student revolutionaries of the west. But, inexplicably, their political impetus suddenly failed. After the enthronement of Havel as President, they ceased to be a significant force. Having suffered internal ructions, often on financial matters, and finding it hard to co-operate effectively with the more conservative Slovaks, they decided that they were not professional politicians. The veterans of the movement told us that an attitude of indifference to politics has now set in. Many of the most effective participants left the movement last year; others are trying to leave the country.

If there is no longer an important student contribution to politics, one would at least expect the role of students in the running of universities to have increased. Yet even here, the evidence is ambiguous. Before the revolution, many were involved in the communist youth movement and abandoned that sinking ship just in time. Since then, they have shunned organisation. In universities, students neither are, nor wish to be, especially powerful. They have, it is true, more freedom to pursue the courses of their choice — but this is not surprising, as they relate that such areas of scholarship as the 'international workers' movement' and 'scientific communism' had been compulsory parts of many curricula. But whilst the professors of these disciplines have now acquired expertise in phenomen-

ology and analytical philosophy, many of the purged scholars of 1968 have failed to return. These heroic window cleaners and boiler-room attendants are considered superannuated and out of touch with their old disciplines. Besides, even those associated with the Dubcek period are thought slightly tainted — Dubcek was, and is, a socialist, even if a relatively decent one. As to the academic effects of the 'velvet revolution', justice has been mixed with mercy: some of the old academic apparatchiks have been sacked, but the prevailing attitude is a distaste for witch-hunts.

'Normalisation' has occurred yet again in Czechoslovakia, though in a rather different sense from the previous. The euphoria of the student-led revolution has given way to a quiet life for its veterans — basically contented, though not without its grievances: about inflation, for example, and the drop in living standards endured by many. But there is a fear that, now that the country is becoming less exciting for westerners, those who helped in the past will simply abandon them now. Lecturers and students from Britain, sent to smuggle books and organise seminars, played cat and mouse with the secret police throughout the eighties; will those people simply leave the Czech academics to their own devices now? But it is not only the maintenance of academic connections that is desired, (though, as some students pointed out, this is not desired by those university teachers who fear that they will be 'unmasked' by an influx of books from the west). The plea was for the speedy de-bureaucratization of the procedures for entering Britain to study and work. The students are anxious for much more information about British universities, and more efficient procedures for scholarships and short-term work permits. Britain, perhaps with good reason, is wary of letting in too many East Europeans (the difficulties Poles have getting visas are still considerable, for instance), but now that we no longer impose visa requirements on the Czechoslovaks, we begin to run out of excuses for the other difficulties we create. In the wake of the 'revolution' in Romania, France was speedily increasing its influence there, setting up educational institutions and sending advisors. Britain should not lag behind in spreading its influence in the formerly communist states.

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THE NARMADA VALLEY PROJECT: ECONOMIC MIRACLE OR ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER?

by B. Seshadri

IN 1957 an investigative report on the Narmada river valley project in Central India, published in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* (a magazine of *The Times of India*, Bombay) said 'In mid-April this year, the Union government passed what many would consider the death sentence on one of India's most majestic and sacred rivers', and concluded, 'the world's largest planned ecological disaster is about to commence'. The Bombay Natural History Society, the most important non-governmental naturalist and conservation body in India, said in an editorial in *Hornbill*, its quarterly news magazine, 'we should now get ready to weep' for the people of the Narmada valley.

Strong words, indeed, from both sources. What had happened was that the Central Government had extended the clearance already given a year previously to the Gujarat state government to proceed with its part of the project, to the Madhya Pradesh state government also, so that, in effect, total sanction had been bestowed for the implementation of the giant project. It was the largest construction project in human history, involving the building of an astronomical 3,200 dams, with their appurtenant structures, in the Narmada river system. Environmentalists in India had argued passionately against the project. They had lost. The Narmada valley project has swung into construction.

The Narmada, 1,300 km or 808 miles long, a river sacred as the Ganga and hoary in Hindu mythology and legend, rises near the holy shrine of Amarkantak in the Maikal Range in Central India. It flows, like its big southern neighbour, the Tapti, but unlike most other rivers in the Deccan peninsula, from west to east into the Arabian Sea. In its upper reaches, it weaves about and descends steeply over several rapids and falls, and at Jabalpur, makes an abrupt left turn, falling over the Dhuan Dhar Falls and cutting a gorge through the famed Marble Rocks. From here, its course is westward through alluvial upland valleys, shut in between the Vindhya and Satpura Ranges. These valleys nowhere exceed 50 km or 31 miles in width, and in places force the river into tumultous flow in gorges. At the western end of the two mountain ranges, the river bursts through yet another barrier, the Rajpipla Hills, and descends in a series of fast-flowing rapids to a flat, fertile plain. Through this plain it meanders placidly for the last 100 km or 62 miles to widen into an estuary and empty into the Gulf of Khambhat (formerly Cambay).

Till about fifty years ago, the highlands of Central India and the slopes of the Vindhyas and the Satpuras were among India's wildest regions, marvellously rich in flora and fauna. Evocative descriptions of the region are to be found in the classic work, *The Highlands of Central India: Notes on Their Forests and Wild Tribes, Natural History, and Sports* by Captain J. Forsyth. Floral and faunal degradation began after independence, when

there was little control exercised over forest conservation. With the river running between high banks of rock for most of its course, the water was well below the surrounding countryside, and the river's utility for water transport was nil and for irrigation minimal. The usable water came from its 41 tributaries, and a bewildering variety of agricultural systems came into use, growing a great range of crops. In contrast, the estuary, enriched by alluvial deposits washed down from the upper reaches, contributed to the fertility of the land, although devastation by floods in heavy rainfall years was a hazard. The sea fish, hilsa (*Hilsa ilisha*), which swam up the river from the sea during the monsoon was an important food source for the Bombay and local markets.

This ancient scenario began to change with the indiscriminate destruction of the natural wilderness which proceeded with such totality in the wake of independence. Sometimes it was because of development projects, many of which were hastily conceived and executed for political reasons, and sometimes it had no other aim than immediate profit to the perpetrators of destruction. A plentiful supply of guns after the war nurtured night-hunting with jeep-and-searchlight, and wildlife was decimated. I was with such a party once, and it was a horrific experience. Yet, the Narmada and Tapti basins retained much of their wild glory simply because of their great expanse. The many million people who lived in the two valleys — nearly half of them tribals such as the Bhils, the Gonds and the Baigas — carried on as they had for hundreds of years, not materially prosperous by modern reckoning but not suffering the privations of the urban poor or country folk in famine years.

Into this scene, the Narmada valley project was mooted in 1946. Public expression of disquiet on the consequences to the environment began to be voiced only much later, because the giant river valley projects which began to be constructed in those years — Bhakra, Hirakud, Damodar and many more — received immensely favourable publicity both in India and abroad. They were hailed as examples of the new Indian spirit and determination to abolish poverty, and were presented as unqualified successes. People in India believed they were. They were heady days of achievement at home, and the Nehru era abroad seemed to bring prestige.

The Narmada ran through the states of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, and was also the inter-state boundary for short lengths between them and the state of Maharashtra. Thus, proposals for the utilisation of its waters became a vociferously fought inter-state dispute, a phenomenon which bedevilled all large scale exploitation of river waters. The Central Government set up the Narmada Water Dispute Tribunal in 1969. This body sat for ten years, bewildered by the inflated claims and counter-claims advanced by the bureaucrats and engineers of all three states. When the project began to be given shape and figures began to emerge, environmentalists were aghast to learn that it would involve the construction of over 3,000 dams and a glut of other structures, and the destruction of much prime forest land. It did not need sagacity to realise that this number of structures could or would ever be built, but this was beside the point. The World

Bank and other external bodies were to assist with finance.

Two giant dams of the project became the principal foci of criticism by the opposition because they were the easiest to attack. The Narmada Sarovar was to be erected near Punasa in East Nimar District in Madhya Pradesh, and was to irrigate 303,945 acres of land and generate 220 mw of electricity. The Sardar Sarovar was to be built near Badgam in Bharuch District in Gujarat, and was to irrigate 3,706,650 acres and produce 300 mw. There were to be another 28 major dams, 135 medium-sized dams, and 3,000 minor dams. Altogether the dams would inundate 865,000 acres of prime forest, 11% of all forests in this class in the valley, and 494,220 acres of already cultivated land.

Many other benefits were claimed for the project. This was a standard, now-commonplace list for all large river valley development: flood control; assured water supply for industry and domestic use; availability of big blocks of new power; pisciculture in the reservoirs; tourism; and so on. There was guarded criticism from within areas of the Central Government and research bodies where it was felt that enough data had not been presented or available data had not been analysed without bias. Anxiety was expressed at the obvious unpreparedness of the state governments to undertake the gigantic task assuredly fraught with many unknowns. Extraneous finance sources expressed disquiet at various times. Concern from environmentalists from outside India was not sustained and made little impact.

The principal question the conservation lobby in India — not organised, by the way — asked was whether the project would create more wealth than it would destroy. This was fundamental because the project would set in motion such basic changes in the environment of the river valley as would for ever be irreversible. If it turned out to be an ecological disaster, there was no way to get back. Ill effects of giant oil spills in the sea or the maniacal mismanagement of the Aral Sea might be mitigated in tens of years, or even a hundred years, but there was no way in which the river valley could be restored to its former state. The project would change the geography of the valley by creating a vast series of lakes, reservoirs and pools, obliterate large tracts of original forest and with its unique flora and a wealth of wildlife, and induce a host of unpleasant secondary effects, not only in the areas directly transformed by the constructions but also in adjoining lands. It would compel the evacuation of tribal groups and efface their age-old culture.

Therefore, the protestors asked, were the dams justified and were they viable? Was the project not a 'temple-building' prestige exercise undertaken for political ends? Did the planners learn from the experiences of the great-dams era of post-independence? Was the spending of a huge $25 billion justified in the economic state of the country? Did not the whole concept run contrary to the avowed policy of sustaining forest cover, already dangerously depleted? Was it not true that another segment of this policy that where forests were inescapably lost an equivalent area should be afforested was never implemented and indeed was incapable of

implementation because of population pressure? Was it fully understood that what were offered as benefits could never replace the cultural impoverishment that would overwhelm the tribal people?

These questions were answered by authority in various ways, piecemeal: in parliament and legislature, press interviews, handouts, written articles in journals by project staff, etc. In summary, the misgivings were dismissed as alarmist. The opposition lacked cohesion and therefore strength. The technicalities of the project are highly complex, and cannot be discussed here. The benefits claimed — irrigation, power, flood control, pisciculture, tourism, and many more lesser advantages — would, of course, be benefits if they turned out to be so. Some parts of them will, certainly. Except that in activating them, the critics claimed, the contra-indications were too great to make them really justifiable. I will run briefly through the main planks of the objections and the official rejoinders to them.

An important fear was that the big dams would be located in zones of moderate seismicity. Problems associated with giant dams fronting vast reservoirs and located in like geological formations were well known. Some 30 earthquakes had occurred, the biggest of magnitude 6.3. An expert world opinion claimed that the two biggest dams would create reservoir-induced seismicity, observed at other sites in India. This could be aggravated by the innate earth faults common to the region and the great heights of the dams — 91 m (298.5 ft) and 155 m (508.5 ft) — and the expanse and depth of the impounded water. But the planners dismissed the possibility of reservoir-induced seismicity, albeit after studies.

Waterlogging and salinisation of land surroundng the reservoirs had been commonly seen in other big dam projects, leading to severe loss of agricultural land. There was no effective drainage out of these areas. One major study in India concluded that serious waterlogging would be inevitable and forecast a 40 per cent loss of irrigated land in the neighbourhood. Associated with the waterlogging were health hazards, also created at similar Indian sites. Subsoil water elevation led to stagnation and contamination and a rise in the incidence of water-borne diseases such as malaria, filaria, bilharzia, cholera, etc. Planners promised suitable measures to check this unpleasant side effect.

Pisciculture in the big extant reservoirs had not been a success. Local fishing economics had been destroyed by the interference to free-flowing water. Hilso and giant prawn losses from the Narmada were predicted to be serious. But project authorities felt that thriving fish industries could be successfully organised in the man-made lakes. This was to an extent true — there are ways of sustaining fish migration and rearing — but Indian experience was not encouraging. Forest destruction has been mentioned before. The two big dams alone would submerge 135,910 acres of prime forest, which would be clear-felled before the waters rose. Loss of forest cover would induce erosion, already a source of immense destruction in many parts of India. Wildlife would, of course, go with the forest. The abundant wildlife included tiger, leopard, many smaller cats, civets, hyena, sloth bear, wild dog, nilgai, sambar, chital, wild pig, and numerous

other mammals. Many species of birds and reptiles would also suffer. Flora unique to the region would be lost. Planning did not offer translocation of animals, well nigh impossible in India where there was such terrific pressure on the forests. But it did offer to contain wildlife loss, small consolation.

Not least would be the effects on the displaced tribal populations. The tribals had traditionally lived on the fruits of the forest and the cultivation of forest clearings to which they made no claim to ownership. They would get no compensation on moving out. Yet, an official at the very top of the project administration said that they should make 'a sacrifice for the sake of the community' and 'face an uncertain future so that others may live in happiness and be economically better off'. Was the man off-guard when he said that? Or, was he truly reflecting the cynicism of his political masters? Such human tragedy has been commonplace in Indian river valley developments, and Central and state governments continue to pay unfailing lip-service to erasing the plight of the poor while remaining uncaring.

Several sites of religious and cultural importance — the Surpaneshwar Temple in Gujarat, the Siva Temple in Rajghat in Madhya Pradesh, and scores of others. Villagers were passionately attached to the sites and their destruction would be a cruel deprivation. Thankfully, the planners have not offered to dismantle the temples and re-erect them elsewhere. Such efforts elsewhere have yielded crude results. Costs of the project are ever rising. Manipulation of figures is a well recognised occupation of the Indian bureaucracy, which time-serves the political masters of the moment. Planners have repeatedly talked of water going to waste in the Narmada. Yet, even today, impounded water behind many dams — Tawa, Barna, Bargi, etc — has not been fully utilised. In other cases, such as Mettur — which was a trailblazer in big-dam building — water in the reservoir has been so low for many years because of erosion and deforestation in the catchment areas that both irrigation and power yields have been only fractions of the promised bounties.

Alternatives to the project have been suggested to minimise environmental damage: series of small dams and reservoirs, small-scale single-purpose schemes, lift irrigation, etc. But India's politicians and planners look to grandiose schemes to keep them in office, notwithstanding the near-bankruptcy of the country. If they were told in school that cutting one's coat according to one's cloth was a sensible thing to do, they have forgotten it. I have followed events with increasing disillusionment. As the Narmada controversy was running its course, my mind's eye often returned to the wonderland of that valley, where I had spent many happy hours with camera and notebook, cultivating my own brand of kinship with the wildlife.

[B. Seshadri was formerly general-secretary of The Institution of Engineers (India), the national association of engineers in that country, and is an acknowledged authority on the wildlife of India.]

JAPANESE-AMERICAN TRADE RIVALRY

by Ian Christopher

THE Japanese seem intent on destroying the world trading system that has brought them from the ashes of defeat to an astonishing level of affluence. In a meeting which included the Prime Minister of Japan, Toshiki Kaifu and President Bush, they provided several great photo-opportunities — smiling allies preparing plans for a new world order — but it did not obscure the hard fact that Japanese-American relations are at a low ebb. And if a trade war does break out, weakening the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), Europe will inevitably be drawn in.

The trade war might just happen. Congress is rife with anti-Japanese sentiment, in part because Japan dithered so long before agreeing to share the burden of the Gulf War. First it offered token financial support. Then it offered $13 billion, an acceptable but modest sum, given its dependence on Middle East oil. Then it held back payment until fluctuating exchange rates reduced the value of the yen by some $500m. Congress is annoyed.

But it is not so nearly annoyed as it is over Japan's persistent refusal to open its markets to American goods, a refusal that reached ludicrous heights at a recent trade fair in Japan.

The United States Rice Council displayed 10lb of American rice in a locked glass case, under the sign: 'Have a Rice Day'. Japan's agriculture minister ordered its removal. When the Americans refused, the Japanese threatened to cut off their electricity and have them arrested. They surrendered and withdrew the offending grains. But Edward Madigan, Secretary of Agriculture, fired off a letter to his Japanese counterpart pointing out that America's two million farmers might stop buying Japanese pick-up trucks. Of such stuff is a trade war made.

More significantly, the office of the United States Trade Representative, in its latest report on trade barriers, complains about Japan's high tariffs on petrochemicals, aluminium, paper and a wide range of farm products. It also asks Japan to relax its quotas on import of shoes, wheat, rice and peanuts, and to abandon artificial barriers to timber and other imports. It points out that the Japanese government procurement rules continue to discriminate against foreign computers.

None of this is small beer. The Trade Representative estimates that one restriction — on imported rice — is costing American farmers $65m a year. Perhaps even more important is the fuel Japan's policies add to protectionist fires in America.

The Democrats, led by the House minority leader and presidential aspirant, Richard Gephardt, have been groping for an opposition theme. They think they have found one. Under the headline 'No More Sucker', Senator Hollings wrote in the *New York Times*, 'We tried to set an example of high minded free trade and openness, and we were mugged'.

Pressure to retaliate by restricting imports have not been relieved by

recent declines in the trade deficit with Japan. Critics of Japan's one way policies say the improvement is ephemeral and misleading — ephemeral because the drop in America's imports is due to a transient, recession-induced reduction in American appetites for television sets, video recorders and cars. And misleading because the quality of trade is turning against America, even as numbers measuring the quantity of imports and exports improve.

'More and more of the high-tech quality, high quality, high-end jobs are being controlled by the Japanese', says Professor Bruce Scott of Harvard. The National Association of Manufacturers agrees. In a letter to President Bush it called for a fundamental re-evaluation of relations with Japan to prevent declines in 'living standards, leading-edge technologies, research-and development-intensive exports and per capita income'.

If that re-evaluation results in anything like the 'results-oriented' trade policy for which many Democrats are pressing — quantitative targets for trade, by product — Japan will retaliate. There is a new feeling of assertativeness in that country, reflected in videos, depicting lazy American factory workers unable to cope with Japanese methods or keep the pace set by Japanese managers.

This assertiveness is reflected in a hardening of Japanese attitudes. Japan's agriculture minister says there will be no easing of restrictions on rice imports. Its vice-minister of finance for international affairs refused a request to drop restrictions on American financial services firms. And flexing his creditor's muscles, he threatened to curb the flow of Japanese credit if America retaliated.

All this bodes ill for the fledgling economic recovery. A good deal of the world's prosperity stems from the increase in world trade that accompanied postwar liberalisation efforts. Japan makes good, inexpensive cars for Americans to drive; Americans make films that Europeans watch; Europe provides fine engineering products. Everyone benefits.

But America is also the world's most efficient producer of food and financial services. Its computers are among the best, as is its telecom equipment. Yet the Japanese government will not let its people have free access to these products, apparently thinking that America will continue to buy $90 billion of its goods every year even though the Americans cannot display, much less sell, 10lb of rice in Tokyo.

Japan may be right. But if its politicians are wrong, and America's protectionists get the bit between their teeth, the liberal world trading system may be festooned with restrictions that makes goods more expensive and economic growth more difficult.

THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN METROPOLIS

by Marvin Goldwert

FROM the very outset of its existence, the Western metropolis has been identified with commerce. The modern city first came into being in the 11th century, after a long period of economic stagnation during the early Middle Ages. Sites for the new cities were largely determined by two features: (1) the place was situated favourably for trade and (2) it was defensible.

The long-standing identification of the Western metropolis with commerce is, however, today being challenged by three pillars of a revolution in communications: (1) the ease and economy of long-distance telephoning; (2) FAX; and (3) the ever-improving computer. For the United States, this revolution in communications raises a question of fundamental importance for the future of the commercial city: why should a businessman locate his offices in the expensive metropolis, when, using modern communications, he can run his business from the sylvan peace of, say, Wyoming?

The foregoing revolution in communications must be analyzed within the context of a fundamental transformation in the Western economic community, especially in the United States, its leader: the transition from commercial-industrial cities to a service-economy. Increasingly, the economy of the United States is becoming organized around three service-functions: problem-identifying, problem-solving, and the brokering of products produced on an international market-place. Indeed, while there is still a substantial industrial and commercial ingredient in the urban economies of the West, high labour costs may compel the remaining manufacture sectors to migrate, as they have been doing, to the developing world.

It is crucial to ponder the social and political impact of the fore-going economic trends. As the Western economies change to a service-oriented international market-place, many manufacturing and commercial jobs will either wither away or migrate to the developing world. Trapped in the inner cities will be a permanent, down-trodden ghetto minority, long dependent on manufacturing jobs to survive in a changing world. The tax base of the metropolis will narrow as businesses will abandon the cities, thereby leaving little foundation for either a viable economy or a public school system. Crime, drug-use, vast slums, and the breakdown of the ghetto family will result from such trends. Social costs will be resisted by the Centrist middle class, moving to the suburbs, even now growing in its resistance to new taxes to aid the ghetto masses. Hence, the once proud commercial metropolis may deteriorate into a vast slum, with its only redeeming feature being the city as a cultural centre, the traditional sphere of patronage of the upper class.

The foregoing trends in the West, especially in the United States, constitute a threat to Liberalism. This threat is marked by a change in national voting patterns. For example, in the contemporary national politics of the

United States, presidential contests pit the Conservative-Centrist alliance of the rural vote and the suburban middle class against the Liberal cities. This is a key to the gigantic electoral victories of Conservatives like Reagan and Bush.

If Liberals are ever again to win a presidential election, they must wean the Centrist middle class of the suburbs away from Conservatism. As the plaudits for Bush's triumph in the Gulf War begin to fade, it will become clear that his administration is bereft of any social vision that might come to grips with the decline of the metropolis. Just as in American history, in the early 20th century, the urban middle class produced a Progressive movement aimed at alleviating suffering in the cities, so, too, Liberals of today must do the same, while proving their ability to be fiscally responsible. Urban Liberals must forsake their appeal to Centrism, and must be bold and charismatic. Meanwhile, the Gulf War has established the necessity for a strong, if streamlined, military, thereby narrowing the resources which can be potentially available for urban reform. Finally, if there is to be a Liberal revival in the United States, it must capture the presidency; for all American reform movements are identified with a strong chief executive.

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The September number of *Contemporary Review* includes *Travelling through Perestroika: Across the USSR by Bicycle* by Simon Vickers, *Minnesota by Air: Transatlantic Eavesdropping* by Tim Gebbels and *Art in Hospital* by J. F. Baron and M. F. R. Miles.

ROAD TO ROT: THE NEW 'OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY'

by A. D. Harvey

IN his life of Sir James Murray in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, C. T. Onions described Murray's creation, the original *Oxford English Dictionary*, as marking 'an immense advance upon all previous lexicography'. The revision of this great work for the second edition published in 1989 was of course a colossal task, but one which bears no comparison with the stupendous scale of the original undertaking. Unfortunately the quality of the scholarship of the second edition also bears no comparison with that of the first.

Sometimes necessary revisions have been omitted. Both editions give Samuel Pepys as having made the first recorded use of the word 'romantic' in two of its various distinct meanings:

> 2a. Of a fabulous or fictitious character; having no foundation in fact. [Earliest use cited:] Pepys's Diary 10 March 1667, 'These things are almost romantique, and yet true'.[1]
>
> 5a. Characterized or marked by, invested or environed with, romance or imaginative appeal. [Earliest use cited:] Pepys's Diary 13 June 1666, 'There happened this extraordinary case — one of the most romantique that ever I heard of in my life'.

One might perhaps think that the quotation taken from Pepys to illustrate the meaning of *romantic* in the 2a sense of fabulous or fictitious is actually in the 5a sense of characterized by romance or imaginative appeal: events cannot *be* almost fabulous or fictitious and without foundation in fact, they either are or are not true, though they may in varying degrees *seem as if* fabulous or fictitious. Perhaps the distinction is bogus in any case. In his diary for 28 September 1667 Pepys refers to a companion as 'telling me romantic lies of himself', which seems to be in the 2a sense but could be read also in the 5a sense.

Perhaps more important is Pepys's description of Windsor Castle in his diary for 26 February 1666 as 'the most Romantique castle that is in the world'. This is clearly in the 5a sense: and anticipates the example given by *OED* by nearly eleven weeks.

Eleven weeks is nothing to the lexicographer of course: but sixteen years might be considered significant. Thomas Bayly's *Herba Parietis or the Wall Flower* of 1650 is sub-titled 'a history which is partly true, partly romantick, morally divine', which seems to be a fairly unambiguous instance of usage in the 2a sense.[2]

Sometimes the sloppiness is in the editors' conception of how the language works. The word *Rococo*, in its first meaning as an adjective, is defined as 'Old-fashioned, antiquated' as in *The Foreign Quarterly Review*'s vintage 1836 citation 'This species of delicacy seems now to be so thoroughly *perruque*, and *rococo*, or whatever be the newest and most approved term for old-fashioned'. This is to mistake figurative use of language for the coining of new literal terms. *OED* does not itself regard *perruque* as a synonym for *rococo*, meaning old-fashioned. Under the

preferred spelling 'peruke' one finds only a noun and a verb: the nearest adjective is 'peruked'.

If we stay with words beginning RO we find that the editors frequently make the odd assumption that a phenomenon can exist in the public gaze for generations before a word is coined to denote it. From the end of 1914 British military aircraft were painted with concentric red, white and blue circles as identification markings. These are now generally described as 'roundels'. According to *OED* the word can be traced back to *The Daily Telegraph* which on 1 July 1948, three years after the end of the Second German War, suddenly remarked: 'The RAF plane — I could see the roundel — was spiralling down without a trail'. One wonders what the thousands of men serving in the RFC, RNAS and RAF had been calling a roundel for the previous 34 years. It seems indeed that it was *not* called a 'roundel' in the First World War. A restricted-circulation booklet issued by the Air Ministry in June 1918 entitled 'Identification Marks on All Aircraft' used the term 'concentric circles' or, in the case of the blue-white-blue roundels on aircraft in the Greek aviation service, 'triple rings'.[3] The everyday usage was probably 'cockade', adopted from the standard French term *cocarde*. The earliest use of 'cockade' in this sense that I have found in an English work dates from 1935;[4] this usage is not noticed by *OED*. 'Roundel' seems to date from early in the Second World War: it appears in Eric Sargent's *The Royal Air Force* (1942).[5]

Amongst the aircraft marked with roundels in the Second World War were Hawker Typhoon fighter-bombers armed with air-to-ground rockets. *OED* gives the first use of the term 'rocket-firing' as 1978. Norman Macmillan's *The Royal Air Force in the World War*, volume 4, part 2, (1950), p.170 states 'Nineteen squadrons of RAF rocket-firing Typhoons entered the battle on August 7'. *OED* also slips up with 'rocket tube'. When ground-to-ground rockets were introduced into European warfare in the 1800s they were originally fired from frames but their inventor, Sir William Congreve, soon developed a tube to fire them from, and in *A Treatise on the General Principles, Powers, and Facility of Application of the Congreve Rocket System as Compared with Artillery* (1827) he boasted, 'The weight of a 12-pounder gun is 18 cwt, while that of a 12-pounder Rocket tube, which projects the *same weight of ammunition* is only 20 lbs (p.37). *OED* however prefers the authority of a multi-volumed work entitled *300 Years Hence*, which appeared prophetically in 1881, 53 years after Congreve's death.

The editors assume in fact that words are less likely to be coined when phenomena are current than when they are past and half forgotten. The earliest usage of 'Jolly Roger', the pirates' emblem, is given by *OED* as 1785, in Francis Grose's *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*. There were virtually no pirates left by 1785. On the other hand Abel Boyer's *The Political State of Great Britain*, volume 28 (1724) writes:

> they all came upon Deck, and hoisted *Jolly Roger*, (for so they call their black Ensign, in the Middle of which is a large white Skeleton, with a Dart in one Hand, striking a bleeding Heart, and in the other an Hour Glass.) . . . When they fight under *Jolly Roger*, they give Quarter. (p.152).[6]

Quite apart from the 58 years swallowed up in *OED*'s chronology, it is worthy of notice that in the years when pirates were thriving and numerous, 'Jolly Roger' was used without the definite article: exactly the kind of information one would hope to find in a good dictionary.

There are of course tens of thousands of words in *OED*, and errors and omissions are only to be expected. The question is, how many errors and omissions ought one reasonably expect. The foregoing examples, all picked out from the same relatively small part of the dictionary after only a cursory inspection, suggest that any single researcher of average aptitude could pick out more than 500 errors and omissions without particular difficulty: a dozen part-time researchers, working independently, could probably pick out 5,000. The publication of the second edition of the *OED* was celebrated in the press with suspiciously sycophantic applause, but now the period of celebration is over it is time to examine the real lessons of this uncompleted operation, and begin preparation of a third edition which will make a more earnest attempt to maintain the scholarly standards of *OED*'s founder.

NOTES:

1. The subdivisions, 2a, 5a etc. are from the 1989 edition. The Robert Latham and William Matthews edition of Pepys's Diary, London 1970–83, gives this entry as dated 11 March 1667. This edition also shows that Pepys wrote 'Romantique' with a capital 'R', in acknowledgement of its status as a new-coined word. The revisers of *OED* evidently prefer the authority of Pepys's earlier, and less scholarly, editors, who print the word with a small 'r'.
2. Bayly is referred to as the earliest user of the word 'romantic' in the Latham and Matthews edition of Pepys's Diary, companion volume, page 608, though the name is given as Bayley and the date of publication as 1651.
3. Public Record Office AIR 1/679/21/13/2190. Material of this kind, though not published in the strict sense, actually has a much wider circulation than most books, and is an appropriate source for lexicographers.
4. [Georg] Haupt Heydemarck *War Flying in Macedonia*, translated by Claud W. Sykes, London 1935, p.89. 'Cockade' is also the usual *American* term for the roundel markings used by American, and in fact all Allied, aviation services in the First World War; in this sense it is used in the title of the *Cross & Cockade Journal* founded in 1960.
5. The British Library's copy of Eric Sargent's *The Royal Air Force* has been mislaid. My personal copy is of the second edition, dating apparently from 1943. The word 'roundel' appears on pages 398 and 403.
6. Marcus Rediker *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seaman, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750*, Cambridge 1987, p.278, fn 77 says that the Jolly Roger was reported in use in *The Boston News-Letter* 10–17 September 1716, but no copy of this North American publication is available in Britain. (I am grateful to Peter LeFevre for the reference to Rediker's book). The more usual design of the Jolly Roger, a skull and crossbones, is visible in the picture of Captain Teach's ship in Charles Johnson *A General History of the Lives and Adventures of the Most Famous Highwaymen, Murderers, Street-Robbers, &c. to which is added, a Genuine Account of the Voyages and Plunders of the most Notorious Pyrates*, London, 1734, plate opposite p.203.

SARTRE: BEAU-IDÉAL OF A LEFT INTELLECTUAL

by A. L. Rowse

WHEN Jean-Paul Sartre died some 50,000 French paid tribute, accompanying his obsequies. At an American university the professor of French asked me why so much attention was paid to Sartre rather than, say, to Montherlant or Mauriac. These were much better writers but, though more appreciated by the judicious, they had not the advantage of appealing to the popular illusions of the Left, now being so cruelly exposed around the world.

Where does it leave Sartre?

I think we may take him as a revealing barometer of the illusions prevailing in the intellectual life in our time, if not among more responsible, practical elements in society.

What more illusory, or sillier, than Sartre's declaration that Stalin's Russia was 'the incarnation of human freedom'? It is fair to say that he later contradicted this. He was much given to contradicting himself — like his opposite number in Britain, Bertrand Russell, (Michael Foot's 'my man of the century'), who advocated dropping a nuclear bomb on Moscow, and later denied it — when proved against him, he had forgotten it.

Sartre had no conscience about contradicting himself; but he never contradicted his view that the French people were never more free than under the German Occupation. In his essay on occupied Paris after all, people were imprisoned as much 'by their own liberty'. 'Torture is communion in which two freedoms meet'. One thinks of the Gestapo Headquarters in the Hotel Lutétia where cultivated officers could play the piano so that one didn't hear what went on in the basement below.

Never mind: Sartre is ready with an epigram to cover resistant circumstances — he is indeed praised in that 'everything can be summed up in an epigram'. Thus 'freedom loses itself to affirm itself'. Perhaps the Hotel Lutétia did not exist. But it does: I stayed there, not long after its deplorable record during the war.

No matter: violence is sometimes advocated, sometimes defended. His views went to and fro like a weathercock. In 1947 he was opposed to violence; by 1951 he 'showed that his attitude had changed, and in *Saint Genet* he was taking the view that without violent resistance and militancy the oppressed majority could never come fully alive. In 1959 he had written the *Critique* with its apologia for Terrorism'. Genet is the gifted thief and prison lag to whom Sartre devoted a whole book, elevating him to the status of a saint. The *Critique* is Sartre's long two-volumed *Criticism of Dialectical Reason*, though we need not expect much reason in it.

He tells us that truth is to be found in materialism, and the aim of the philosopher, i.e. himself, should be 'to make the truths contained in materialism hold together, and to construct a philosophy which suits the needs of the revolution as closely as the myth does'. Today we see such 'truths' as bankrupt as the myth is. But does truth matter? 'It's not by

refusing to lie we'll get rid of falsehood, it's by going all out to get rid of class barriers'. More important is 'to indoctrinate the masses with Marxism-Leninism'. Alas for Sartre, the day for that is already over.

In himself he never cared about truth. 'In his autobiography, as in his biographies, Sartre camouflages his indifference to facts and chronology. When Sartre's mother read the book she was so upset that she said, "Poulou has understood nothing about his childhood", and to put the record straight she sat down to write her own memoir'.

What is the point of autobiography or biography if it is not true? It robs the genre of its essence. If truth is not considered, then take to fiction. Sartre did take to fiction in his novels and plays, his best work. But he became bored with novel writing, and left his programme uncompleted; nor did he set such store by his plays as by his philosophising, and wrote them rapidly. His endless volumes of philosophy, *L'Etre et le Néant*, etc. are valueless — nonsense about Existentialism which he derived from the pro-Nazi philosopher Heidegger.

So the biographies of Baudelaire and Flaubert are pointless. The poetry of Baudelaire is dismissed as 'useless' — but is utility the criterion of poetry? Merit, we are told, is no judge, only a mass-audience is. Here, as throughout Sartre's writing, we see an extrapolation, an enlargement, of himself. Throughout, he is posturing to a mass-audience — and received his reward: coach-loads were laid on to see him writing in public at the Café des Deux Magots. A great deal of his writing was done in cafés, or in his room jostled by attentive disciples.

Flaubert and the Goncourts are condemned for not writing against the repression of the Paris Commune in 1871. Would any writing by anybody have had any effect? True, the repression was unnecessarily severe; but the provocation had been great — the destruction of historic buildings like the Tuileries and the Hotel de Ville with its priceless archives. It recalled the hideous destructiveness of the original French Revolution. At any rate the Paris populace received a lesson in 1871 and did not cause trouble again for another century. The attitude of Flaubert and the Goncourts was disgust with demotic society, and the lesson *they* drew was to withdraw from it.

Not so Sartre: he revelled in its manifestations, as in the squalor of his personal life. Not that he liked the People, or contact with them as such: he had little liking for them as human beings, his attitude was didactic, theoretical and abstract. He might have taken a hint from Alexander Pope: 'that it is not sufficient to consider Man in the abstract: books will not serve the purpose, nor yet your own experience singly'. Paradoxically throughout his life Sartre thought of himself as a man of action. Here again a word of Pope's common sense is in place:

> His passion still, to covet general praise,
> His life to forfeit it a thousand ways . . .
> A fool, with more of wit than half mankind,
> Too rash for thought, for action too refined.

His practical influence was at its maximum with adolescent students, reaching its apogee in the riots of May 1968, which paralysed Paris and

suspended government for a time. Here was the culmination of his teaching, equating Revolution with Culture. 'Many of his young supporters were members of Action committees'. Sartre encouraged the violence; as usual he had a phrase for it, he called it 'Counter-Violence'. He condemned Raymond Aron for not taking part in it: because he was not 'embattled he was not fit to teach'!

This time he criticised the Communist Party, which was taking a more responsible line and did not support the adolescent rioters. Nor did the working class — Sartre had to reconcile his argument with the fact that the students were *bourgeois*. Never mind: the riots were a foretaste of 'socialist democracy'. Revolution was liberty. Common sense observation of the event would describe it as Anarchy. With Sartre, however, it was all Words, Words, Words. He never had his feet on the ground of common sense.

Deleterious as his influence was — especially bad for the young, who need above all to learn responsibility — Sartre's recommendations were otherwise: 'I believe in illegality'. Abstain from voting: 'when I vote I abdicate my power'. This is in keeping with the 'direct action', the cult of force of Georges Sorel, an influence upon Mussolini and Fascism.

Devoutly anti-American, Sartre thought that there was little to choose between the United States and Stalin's Russia. When it came to Marshall Aid he opposed it, as Stalin did. This was a huge effort towards rebuilding devastated Europe, which was taken up by a great working-class leader, Ernest Bevin, and given direction. It not only pushed ahead the recovery of Western Europe but fed its starving peoples. Never mind: Sartre was against it.

He may be given credit, if credit is due, for supporting the independence of Algeria — and what that has led to! — after the French withdrawal. But practical effect to this was given by De Gaulle, to whom Sartre was, consistently for him, opposed. Voting for the socialist Mitterand was not to vote for Mitterand, he argued, but to vote against De Gaulle. It is like the profundity of his remark 'one cannot see the trees for the trees'. No wonder Ronald Hayman entitles his biography of Sartre, *Writing Against*.

We need not reproach him with typical bad judgment as to the outcome of the German drive to the West in 1940 — he thought that the Germans would overstrain themselves in Holland and Belgium. We find him linking up, naturally, with others of notorious bad judgment, like Bertrand Russell and the prophet of absurdity, Marcuse.

We may return from political absurdities to literature, Sartre's proper sphere, if it may be so regarded. We need pay no attention to gems of wisdom such as equating consciousness with nothingness, or that literature should be 'a synthesis of negation and movement towards a future order. In short literature is the subjectivity of a society in permanent revolution'. Does this mean *anything*? Sartre had a regular habit of wrapping up nonsense, or even commonplace platitudes, in pretentious dicta, which could impress only the half-baked. Indeed the intellectually half-baked were his most ardent disciples. A mentor to adolescent students, he advocated

that they should decide what they were taught in classes!

The deterioration of educational standards in Britain, France, the United States is hardly surprising. It goes along with the democratisation — civics and sociology instead of the three R's, plain grammar, the essentials of languages, history and science. Sartre had no respect for literature as such, thought nothing of style, depreciated it and took no trouble with his own. The classics of literature are described as 'discreditable'. Literature can realise fulness only in a classless society. (The opposite is the truth.) Flaubert, Baudelaire and the Symbolist poets ignored the oppressed masses, who did not read their work. (As if they ever would, or could!) 'The writer must align himself with the majority'. This was orthodoxy under Stalin's Communism, the regime of Zhdanov and the Union of Soviet Writers — and accounts for the purility of its literary and artistic products.

Then why did Sartre devote himself to literary biography? His amorphous, and never completed, work on Flaubert took six volumes, without even reaching *Madame Bovary*. Valueless, since Sartre disconsidered facts: biography was speculation. It would be fair to say that two of Sartre's novels, *La Nausée* and *L'Age de Raison*, may be regarded as respectable works of the second rank, no more. Mr. Hayman concludes that Sartre did not develop his potential as a novelist — if he had, it would have been nothing exceptional. He himself took his plays lightly, attaching more importance to his philosophising and politicising, taking part in the world of action — where so much of human activity, as evidenced by his own, is pointless. Per contra, Montherlant's plays have already attained the status of classics; while the novels of Mauriac create a whole living world of their own.

Sartre received the accolade of a Nobel Prize, such as it is — awarded to second-rate writers, a Steinbeck or Patrick White. No such recognition for writers of the first rank, Henry James or Proust, Kipling or Thomas Hardy.

NOTE:
Quotations are mostly from Hayman's biography of Sartre, *Writing Against*.

THE LONGEST WAR

by Molly Mortimer

THE Isles of Scilly have been threatened by invasion more than once; strategically sited off Cornwall, equi-distant between London and Spain, they did not escape the eye of Phillip II and nearly succumbed to the Armada.

Napoleon had plans, and Hitler subjected them to more than a fair share of machine gunning. But they were never closer to invasion than in the Civil War. As the last Royalist outpost and refuge for Prince Charles in 1646 they were an important target for Cromwell's Admirals, Blake and Ayscue. For, as Ayscue warned, 'If the King's men understood their job, they could make of Scilly a second Algiers' (then the most infamous pirate's nest in the Mediterranean). Blake had other worries. He needed to remove the Island privateers who were harassing Dutch shipping. 'Once we control the harbours,' he said 'the men of war from these piratical rocks will run like mice from a falling house.'

The line, alas, between pirate and privateer in those days was so fine as to be indistinguishable — a matter of choosing the right side at the right time, which more than one sailor learnt to the cost of his head. Blake, increasingly worried that the Royalists on Scilly might even sell the Islands to Amsterdam merchants, took first action in 1651. He was evilly hampered by D Day weather and seasick soldiers; and by Scillonian pilots who deliberately landed his men on uninhabited rocks (of which there are hundreds) in very inclement conditions.

The Dutch had been showing an interest in Scilly for some time. Not only Rotterdam merchants were trading with the islands and landing timber to build warehouses there, but the 1651 Zeeland Report, with its detailed survey of economic conditions, was a blueprint for invasion. The Report complained bitterly of privateers, pointing out that at least 28 Dutch ships had been taken off Scilly. Grenville the Royalist governor of Scilly, retorted that only seven ships had been taken; five, legitimate prize. The Dutch he said had taken 30 ships from Scilly. The law of the sea and contraband in time of war was as complicated then as it is now.

The Dutch States General, dissatisfied, instructed their greatest Admiral Maarten Tromp to take a battle fleet to Scilly and to demand the return of Dutch men, ships and goods held there. If refused, he was to recover them by force. Moreover, all ships leaving Scilly would be taken and sent to Holland. Tromp, a great sailor, probably had royalist sympathies (he had been knighted by Charles I for services to the Queen). But he was also a patriot. It was clear that the Dutch would not have objected if he had taken the Islands. It was certainly feared by the English State Council as shown in their nervous notes about Tromp's great fleet approaching the Islands 'in so suspicious a manner'. Tromp's own journal makes it clear he would have taken the Islands but for the sudden re-appearance of Blake with a force of two thousand men. Tromp demanded clearly the return

of Dutch ships or he would declare war. His demands were not met and he declared war. But in the face of Blake's large force he had no option but to withdraw.

The Dutch wars ended in 1654 but the English, as Pepys put it, kept an eye on Dutch capers for many years longer. And in the many problems to be solved, Scilly was overlooked in the Peace Treaty. So the Islands remained at war with Holland for another 300 years: the longest war in history.

The Dutch also had other things on their minds — notably, tulips. This beautiful flower, introduced to the Netherlands in 1593, caused a kind of madness in the sober Dutch. Bulbs changed hands for thousands of guilders. You could buy a house for three bulbs. But like the English South Seas Bubble, the tulip mania burst and ruination faced many an honest and dishonest burgher by the middle of the 17th century; the Dutch returned dazed, to reality and war.

So, the Scilly war lingered on until 1986, when the Council of the Isles of Scilly informed the Netherlands Embassy that hostilities had never formally ceased.

His Excellency the Dutch Ambassador to the Court of St James, Mr. Rein Huydecoper, accepted the information with perfect gravity; and with grave humour arrived in Scilly on April 17th, 335 years to the day of Admiral Tromp's Declaration. He presented the Islands with a magnificent peace document and made a speech with all his 'tongues' in his cheek. He was anxious, he said, that Scilly should no longer live in fear of invasion by aggressive Dutchmen.

This Peace Scroll finally ended the longest war in the world:

> I, the undersigned Ambassador of the Queen of the Netherlands to the Court of St James herewith declare that whereas in the year 1651, acting upon instruction and mandate of the States General of the United Provinces of the Netherlands, their Admiral Marten Harpertzsoon Tromp declared war upon the Isles of Scilly and whereas those same Isles of Scilly subsequently having been reunited with the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland with which the United Provinces of the Netherlands at that time lived in peace thus all reasons for war between the United Provinces and the Isles of Scilly *Ipso facto* having been terminated, but noticing this fact that the return to peaceful relations between the United Netherlands and the Isles of Scilly was never brought to the notice of the inhabitants of those islands, these therefore continuing to believe to be subject to permanent threat of attack and to be living under the cloud of war, now therefore, I the undersigned, herewith declare that the above reunification of the Isles of Scilly with the Duchy of Cornwall and the Commonwealth of England Scotland and Ireland in that same year of 1651 having re-established the friendship and peaceful relations between the people of the Netherlands and the Scillonians, therefore have placed my signature on this Declaration as proof that the war started Three Hundred and Thirty Five Years ago has long ceased to exist and peace and friendship prevails between the people of the Netherlands and the people of the Isles of Scilly.

Peace celebrations lasted well over two days and with many tots and 'tot siens', the invaders finally left, leaving only a lively trade in Dutch bulbs to keep the islands alert for the future.

FAUVISM AND THE SUPREMACY OF COLOUR

by Muriel Julius

AT last London has a museum space that will not be an embarrassment in the twenty-first century. In the new Sackler Gallery in the Royal Academy, the architect, Sir Norman Foster, has replaced the unendearing Diploma Galleries with a pristine pavilion, ingenious, discreet and beautiful.

It opened in June with works that sparked the first art revolution of the twentieth century: 'The Fauve Landscape: Matisse, Derain, Braque and their Circle, 1904-1908'. Fauvism was based on the exultation of pure colour. Like a firework display, it was brilliant but of short duration — it lasted barely five years. There is no need to look for symbols or significant messages in these works — there are none. In these light-filled rooms the paintings look stunning; one should simply luxuriate in their glorious colours.

Fauvism was a reaction against Impressionism. It was against the disappearance of space in favour of overall lighting as seen recently in Monet's series paintings; against careful analysis which had become arbitrary instead of constructive. What counted for the Fauves was new, purified colour painting where light was rendered by contrasts of hue, not of tone.

The Fauves took the greatest liberties with colour, so that trees became violet, the earth pink, houses green and often the colour of a single object, a tree trunk for example, would be altered in different parts to give maximum contrast with the background behind it at each point. André Derain's 'The Trees' (No. 23) from the Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY, being a particularly exuberant example of this.

Fauve painting technique derived from post-Impressionism and neo-Impressionism. The broken strokes, the dabs of colour owed much to Van Gogh, Gauguin and Cézanne. Henri Matisse (1869-1954) was the pivotal figure who provided the whole impetus of the Fauve movement. It was his art and his ideas about art that inspired it. In 1892 Matisse enrolled in the studio of Gustave Moreau at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and met Albert Marquet (1875-1947) and Henri Manguin (1874-1949). A quintessential nineteenth century painter of textured, exotic, mythological fantasies, Moreau was an inspired teacher. In 1896 the critic Roger Marx wrote: 'The fires of insurrection have been lit in the very heart of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts; all the rebels against routine, all those who wish to develop in their own individual way, have gathered under the shield of Gustave Moreau'.

Other artists who shared Fauvist ideas were André Derain (1880-1954) and his bohemian friend, Maurice de Vlaminck (1876-1968) who came from Chatou, a village near the Seine, west of Paris; and Georges Braque (1882-1963), Raoul Dufy (1877-1953) and Othon Friez (1879-1949) who all came to Paris from Le Havre.

In 1904 Matisse painted the celebrated 'Luxe, Calme et Volupté',

groupings of female bathers by the sea, a favourite theme of Cézanne's, attempted less successfully by Othon Friez in 1907, Derain in 1908, leading to Picasso's seminal 'Démoiselles d'Avignon' of 1907. Matisse had employed Divisionism, the optical theory devised by his friend, Paul Signac with whom he was staying at the time. The picture greatly impressed Derain and Dufy when it was exhibited early in 1905 at the Salon des Independents. Dufy said 'When I saw this picture, I understood the new raison d'être of painting'. Although Matisse rejected divisionist technique, it was widely employed by his followers.

Also in 1904 Matisse wrote to Henri Manguin 'What do I want? This is the dominating anxiety of Fauvism. I believe that painting will make me crazy and I am going to try to get out of it as soon as possible.'

Nevertheless in 1905 twelve Fauve artists, Matisse among them, submitted works to the Salon d'Automne. Their paintings were hung in a room by themselves and met with antagonism and ridicule from public and press alike. Louis Vauxcelles, the not unfriendly art critic of *Gil Blas* admired Matisse's courage 'because his entry — and he knows it — will have the fate of a Christian virgin delivered to the wild beasts (fauves) in the arena'.

All this was of slight importance during the period of La Belle Epoch, when Paris was a continually festive capital. Newspapers were far more concerned with the exploits of famous courtesans such as La Belle Otéro, Cléo de Morode or Liane de Pougy, and the Kings and Grand Dukes who courted them. Ironically although the Fauves were neither intellectual nor political, the rebellious excitement of their paintings reflected something of the industrial turmoil in France at the time.

It is a thousand pities that Matisse is so poorly represented in an exhibition of almost seventy works. At least three of his very small seascapes were painted on top of his paint box, and although they now belong to prestigious museums they belong to my category of 'studio sweepings'. 'The Three Bathers' (No. 61) from The Minneapolis Institute of Arts has little in common with the painting of the same subject also 1907 in the State Museum of Art in Copenhagen. In that painting the arrangement of the figures, the room that the bodies take up and the empty areas surrounding them combine in a decorative manner to be expressive. Matisse's art is all about colour, line and rhythm. There is nothing in the present exhibition to compare with the mesmerizing portrait, 'The Young Sailor II' from the Gelman Collection that we saw at the Academy in 1990, nor anything that presages his adventurous and triumphant later career.

This exhibition does, however, allow us to see no fewer than twenty-three Fauve canvases by Derain. He is much more at home with landscape painting than Matisse, with whom he spent the summers of 1905 and 1906 in Collioure, a sleepy Mediterranean fishing port near the Spanish coast. In 1905 the dealer Ambroise Vollard purchased all the paintings in Derain's studio. In 1906 no doubt mindful of the critical and financial success of Monet's exhibition 'Vues de la Tamise à Londres' that had opened at Durand-Ruel in May 1904, Vollard suggested that Derain visit London.

He stayed three months and painted thirty pictures.

Like Monet, Derain was drawn to the River Thames, but unlike Monet his canvases are alive with humanity and movement. His 'Waterloo Bridge' (No. 22) from the Thyssen-Bornemissa Collection is a shimmering mass of broken brushstrokes, with a yellow sky shading into pinks above a bright blue bridge. One senses the excitement of the artist working direct from the subject. The paint is laid on with terrific intensity and panache — great gobs of paint that yet seem absolutely right there.

We are alas, never likely to see anything so colourful as Derain's 'Charing Cross Bridge' (No. 28) from the Musee d'Orsay, Paris. An unfamiliar wide green roadway bounded by dark pink pavements swirls energetically toward the distant bridge. In 'The Thames, Westminster Bridge' (No. 32) the technique is different again — calmer, flatter, and even more satisfying. What is slightly worrying is that Derain's palette for his London paintings differs hardly at all from what he used in 'Fishing Boats, Collioure' (No. 17) painted in the summer of 1905.

Derain's Fauve paintings are the most successful of his long career. In 1908 he came under the influence of Cézanne, 'The Bay of Martigues' (No. 36) and 'Landscape at Cassis' (No. 34) Delgado Museum of Art, New Orleans — are part of a Cubist phase that lasted uneasily until 1910. After that, Derain became that most irritating sort of painter — a pasticheur. As Picasso stated in 1948: 'As soon as an artist takes another as his model, he is lost'.

The exhibition of Derain's late works at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford earlier this year was a disappointing affair. David Elliot the Director wrote: 'The life and work of Derain presents an enigma. Ostensibly he seems to have been an artist who, instead of forging ahead to create new forms of expression, like his friends Matisse and Picasso, chose rather to stand back in the shadows of tradition, entering into a dialogue with the art of the past'. A sad epilogue for an artist who, in his Fauve period, went as far as any of his contemporaries to record the maximum of light and colour.

Of all the Fauves none fitted the name better than the self-taught Vlaminck. A huge giant of a man, to earn some money he entered bicycle races, played the violin in cafés, wrote licentious novels which Derain illustrated, and desired nothing but to paint. When he saw an exhibition of the work of Van Gogh in 1901 he was so enraptured he exclaimed: 'Today Van Gogh means more to me than my own father! '. In 'The Seine at Chatou' (No. 67) from The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection, a restrained Vlaminck tries his hardest to emulate his hero, while in another painting of the same subject (No. 66) Collection Alain Delon from the same year, 1906, his vitality seems to have got the better of him. Vlaminck was happiest out of doors, painting on the banks of a river. All constraint, all discipline exasperated him. He boasted that he had never set foot inside the Louvre.

Raoul Dufy, the eldest of nine children from a poor family, left school at fourteen to work as a clerk in a coffee-importing firm. Eight years later

the Municipality of Le Havre gave him a grant of one hundred francs a month which enabled him to go to Paris to study art.

Although the painters from Le Havre allied themselves with the Parisian Fauves, something about their work is distinctly separate: they were more directly heirs to Impressionist fascination. They set up their easels in Trouville, L'Estaque, Ciotat and Antwerp, all with harbours and docks filled with shipping activity.

The summer of 1906 found Dufy with Marquet in Trouville. We can compare their paintings of the same subject, the broadwalk lined with colourful posters with holidaymakers strolling by. (Nos. 39 and 50). Marquet later used subdued, limpid colours and spent most of his time painting all the quais and bridges along the Seine, concise and satisfying but unexciting.

To the end Dufy's colours remained fresh and brilliant. His vibrant painting, 'Trouville' (No. 41) Fridart Collection, while principally concerned with the architectural rhythm of the brick-red houses, draws the eye into the picture by placing a vivid vermilion parasol above the small figure of a girl in a white dress dead centre of the canvas. Dufy's 'The Regatta' (No. 42) is disarmingly childlike. One can almost hear a spectator announcing that their boy or girl could paint that. Then one sees that Dufy worked on it over two years.

It cannot be denied that the Dufy we know and love was a dandy and a lightweight. His instantly recognizable works with their rapid black line drawing later found their subjects in the sophisticated worlds of yachting harbours, the racecourse at Deauville, the casino in Nice, the Coronation of King George VI, and designing fabrics for the society dressmaker, Paul Poiret and the famous house of Bianchini.

That same summer — 1906 — George Braque was introduced to Fauvism by Othon Friesz. They went together to Amsterdam to paint the port and its shipping. Unlike Friesz whose early promise was followed only by skilful evasions with serious ochres dominating his work, it was from this time that Braque's originality started.

Unlike other Fauves, Braque did not use violent colours. What distinguished his work was not the colours he used but the great care he took fitting them into his compositions. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in his orchestration of reds and pinks in 'Landscape, L'Estaque' 1906 (No. 8), one of the superb modern paintings Mr. Victor K. Kiam bequeathed to the Delgado Museum of Art in New Orleans. Braque was one of the first to break away from the Fauves and only thirty fauve works by him are known. He had intellectual needs not shared by the others and looked to Cézanne rather than Van Gogh as his mentor. On three occasions he went to paint at L'Estaque — a favourite spot of Cézanne, paintings more rhythmic, balanced and elegant than most. Daniel Kahnweiler opened his art gallery in 1907 and was buying work by Picasso. Now he began to buy from Braque. Inevitably the two artists met. We see already in Braque's 'Trees at L'Estaque' (No. 14) of 1908 a burgeoning cubism that was to lead to the masterpieces of 1911. Again it was the critic Louis Vauxcelles

who named the style. Writing of a Kahnweiler exhibition in 1909 he described the works of Braque and Picasso as 'Cubist bizarreries'.

For some reason the work of Henri Manguin (1874-1945) is rarely seen here. Many years ago his son, a successful couturier, showed his collections in a beautiful hôtel privé off the Avenue Matignon. There I saw his father's paintings. Like his friend, Matisse, Henri Manguin was a devotee of the South of France, and particularly of St. Tropez before it became chic. His works, are full of sunshine and exude an aura of happiness. Everything harmonizes and interconnects. His 'Nude under the Trees' of 1905 (No. 48) is dappled with sunshine, while his other painting 'The Pine Forest at Cavalière' (No. 49) is one of the most beautiful landscapes in this exhibition.

The memorial exhibition of Cézanne's works in 1907 was the catalyst that sparked the disintegration of the Fauves as a cohesive movement. Matisse was at the height of his fame, and the foreign artists who flocked to Paris wanted to learn from him. Sarah Stein, Gertrude Stein's sister-in-law, who had been buying his paintings, urged Matisse to start a school. By 1911 when it closed, he had one hundred and twenty students from Russia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, America (Max Weber), even Britain. Matthew Smith came for the last six months. Matisse did not teach them about colour. He taught them drawing from the live model.

It is extremely difficult to give an ideological summary of Fauvism — impossible without including the portraits, interiors and still lifes that exhibit some of its most brilliant features and are absent here.

As Hilton Kramer said: 'What defined the Fauvist movement was this teetering on the brink of artifice and abstraction, and it is only in Matisse's work that the scope of this aesthetic drama and its implications for the future can be fully grasped. By demoting Matisse to a subsidiary role in the current exhibition, the very possibility of providing a definitive account of Fauvism was subverted' (*Modern Painters*, Vol. 4, No. 2).

The exhibition, sponsored by Ford Motor Company, continues until September 1st.

EXHIBITING A MASSIVE MONARCH

by Anthony Gross

THESE days we scarcely miss a chance to celebrate a historical centenary and Henry VIII's 500th birthday has been no exception. The king has been favoured with articles in the press, junkets at Hampton Court and Hatfield, and even an appearance in a television documentary on divorce (BBC 2, May 16). But the focal point of the commemoration is a major exhibition at Greenwich, Henry's birthplace. The residence at Greenwich where the second Tudor king came screaming into the world was demolished less than a decade later and the palace built to replace it has fared no better. The exhibition, which continues until the end of August, is housed in the National Maritime Museum, close to the complex of handsome seventeenth century buildings which now stand on the site.

This choice of location provides a centre of gravity for a subject which might otherwise lack coherence for anyone not well versed in the complexities of sixteenth century history. Henry lived for fifty-six years, ruled for thirty-eight and negotiated twists and turns of policy even more complex than his dealings with wives and ministers. Over the centuries, the facts have become distilled into a powerful myth of a ruthless king who did not spare the axe, but was nonetheless protective of the interests of his people. This development was assisted by Holbein, whose craft transformed the king's bulk into an image still potent enough to serve as the logo for an outsize clothes chainstore. Henry is most easily remembered as what David Starkey has called 'a massive trapezium ... set on the splayed columns of legs'. In moving on to explore the subtleties behind such icons, the experts risk losing their audience in abstraction. By centring attention on the life of the court at Greenwich Palace, the organisers succeed, to some extent at least, in avoiding this pitfall.

The exhibition is divided into rooms intended to lead the visitor through the palace from the magnificence of the rooms of audience and entertainment, to the bedchamber where the king kept his most precious possessions and took his most private counsel. This scheme works best in its early stages. The first room achieves notable effect by surrounding the visitor with a blown up copy of the chief exhibit, Antony van Wyngaerde's sixteenth century panorama of London. Invited to participate in that game of limitless fascination, identifying familiar places from an ancient picture, it is easy to become engaged and transported into a different context. The momentum is maintained in rooms which explore religious and chivalric concepts, teaming exhibits with the decorative motifs of the galleries themselves. The value system of the sixteenth-century nobility was sustained by the axis between religious devotion and adherence to a code of military discipline, so that the close association of these themes provides a vivid demonstration of the life of a Renaissance court. It is not surprising that these are the most successful parts of the exhibition. Royal chapels

and tiltyards, purpose built for public display and heavily embellished with dynastic symbolism, were, in a sense, the theme parks of monarchy. The inner chambers of the household do not lend themselves so well for adaptation to the gallery. It is very difficult to convey intimacy, particularly amid the throng of a weekend afternoon. I, for one, could not hear servants of the body commanding the king's ear with tales of Wolsey's bombast or the machinations of Thomas Cromwell. The exhibits, chiefly maps and scientific instruments, do not help. While it is true that these were the prized personal possessions of sixteenth century princes, who treated them as elaborate adult toys, the organisers would have been well advised to include more intimate objects, such as clothing, to avoid giving the impression of an early science laboratory rather than a bedchamber.

There are other ways in which the exhibition falls some way short of its high early promise. Little sense is given of the magnitude of the events of the reign. The system of linking each room with particular and often quite obscure occasions in the life of the court is too intricate to work effectively. It would be possible to wander through these galleries and not realise that a break with the Roman Church occurred, let alone that it was an event of overwhelming proportions. Equally little attention is given to the bloody factional disputes which punctuated the life of the court. We are invited to admire Holbein's portrait of Henry's favourite, Sir Nicholas Carew, but allowed to ignore the purge which cost Carew his life in 1539. Instead, we are left with an impression firmly centred on the early 1520's and upon Henry VIII's determination to emulate his European neighbours in the gentility and splendour of his court. But even here little attempt is made to convey the hard edge of the underlying political dynamic. Henry's intense rivalry with Francis I of France is suggested, but there is no reference at all to the momentum which appeared to be carrying the Emperor Charles V towards world monarchy. Consequently, much of the monarchy's symbolic imagery is displayed outside its contemporary intellectual context. This is particularly true of the closed imperial English crown with which Henry first imitated and then defied Charles' pretensions. As a result visitors may experience some intoxication at the splendours of Henry's court, but, beyond that, are unlikely to leave with an altered perception of why the king is worth celebrating.

At the same time, the exhibition does prompt a number of thoughts about broader cultural issues which would not be gleaned even from a sophisticated political history. One is the degree to which the court depended on imports both of exceptional craftsmen and of luxury goods. The organisers could scarcely have been more accurate in choosing the title, *A European Court in England*. While Holbein is the most obvious example, the exhibition shows that he was just one of many great talents drawn to England. The Florentine sculptor Torrigiano, the German astronomer Kratzer and the Flemish miniaturist Lucas Horenbout are among those responsible for some of the most impressive artefacts on display. Even the panorama of London which opens the exhibition is the work of a Fleming. For mechanical devices, such as clocks and musical

instruments the English also seem to have depended on imports. It is only in the spheres of gold and silverwork that domestic suppliers seem to have made a substantial contribution. In one respect, this might be thought to testify to Henry's ability to call upon the best that Europe had to offer. But that is not entirely true. Holbein came to England only because he could not find sufficient work in Basel and had already been rejected in France. Kratzer seems to have arrived under something of a cloud. Nor was Henry's record in attracting artists outstanding when set against the experience of other European courts. Where he was served by Holbein, the Emperor could call on Dürer and Titian, while the French king could boast the service of the goldsmith Cellini and a notable painter, Clouet. It is also significant that no generation of indigenous artists appeared to take up Holbein's mantle after his death in 1543. Until well into the reign of Elizabeth, the English court continued to rely on the portrait skills of *émigrés*, most notably William Scrots and Hans Eworth. When no such eminent visitor was in the crown's service, the quality of royal portraiture fell dramatically. It was only with the emergence of Hilliard that the Tudors found a native artist whose technical expertise matched that of the continentals. For all these reasons, the preponderance of continental objects suggests that English luxury crafts were too backward to sustain a court culture fit to compete with those of France or the Netherlands.

Consideration of the lost Tudor palace of Greenwich prompts speculation along broadly similar lines. Of all Henry's palaces, only St. James' and Hampton Court survive. Of Greenwich, where Henry spent much time during the early years of his reign, before the acquisition of Hampton Court and Whitehall from Cardinal Wolsey, and Nonsuch, erected hurriedly after 1538, scarcely a course of bricks survives. Were they built to impress rather than to last? Henry certainly spent large sums on elaborate buildings created for particular festivities and then dismantled. A case in point may be seen in the ceiling of the chapel at Ightham Mote, constructed from painted timbers originally used to decorate royal jousts. The use of such temporary structures for the purposes of display was a common indulgence among Renaissance princes, but there is a suspicion that, at least at Nonsuch, Henry extended something of the same philosophy to more permanent buildings. All the palaces were built of brick, which made them more vulnerable to damage by fire and which was bound to draw some unfavourable comparison with the monumental stone edifices erected in the Loire Valley or in Italy. However, it was not the durability of building materials which determined the shelf life of these palaces, but fashion. At Fontainebleau, Chambord and Urbino princely buildings were already showing signs of the classical influence which was to dominate European architecture for almost three hundred years. By contrast, Henry VIII's palaces showed little change in design from the castles of the late fifteenth century such as Tattershall and South Wingfield. The early Tudor buildings conformed to obsolete defensive ground-plans and still paid lip service to the traditions of the keep and the great hall. These factors may not have weighed heavily with contemporaries, who set great store by the lavish

decorations on which Henry spared no expense, but they certainly explain why so few of the structures survive today. For in the seventeenth century, when England gradually caught up with continental trends, large scale rebuilding was inevitable.

That this exhibition raises cultural issues which exceed the scope of any one reign and extend far beyond the royal household is a testimony to its value as an educational resource. For the adult audience some of this potential is developed in a cogent and comprehensively illustrated catalogue. The thorough descriptions of the exhibits are interspersed with valuable essays on specialist subjects. Alongside informative biographical sketches of the most important artists and craftsmen, Steven Gunn's comments on the joust as a tool of monarchical propaganda and Karen Watts' discussion of the employment of Germans and Flemings to staff the new royal armouries are particularly helpful in taking up themes suggested by the exhibition as a whole. Here, as in the galleries, it would have been desirable for more attention to be paid to the political context, but this omission will not prevent the catalogue from becoming essential reading for anyone interested in the Tudor court.

For younger visitors, upon whom the exhibition is likely to make the most lasting impression, the available literature is lamentably poor. The only book on offer is almost entirely descriptive, with just a few make-weight questions and tasks offered to promote inquiry. The failure to take full account of the political context, evident throughout, is more pronounced here. Assuming either that children are already aware of or are incapable of appreciating Henry's historical importance, the text concentrates entirely upon the minutiae of life at court. It is dispiriting to find that those writing for children should think it worth including a long description of Henry's underclothes or such anodyne remarks as: 'The king always wore a hat, both indoors and out'. At the other extreme, some parents will have to explain references to the king's prominently displayed codpiece or the closure of bathhouses due to the fear of syphilis.

On a broader level, the exhibition's success at recapturing something of the glamour of a Renaissance court is certain to impress visitors of all ages. But what the organisers have failed to realise is that those attending the commemoration of a king want to know as much about who he was as how he lived. The essential question about Henry VIII is how his reputation, which sets him among the most unpleasant of monarchs, can be reconciled with the label of greatness which is often applied to him. The opulence of his court supplies only part of an answer.

Henry VIII, A European Court in England: Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum until September 1, 10-6 Monday to Saturday, 12-6 Sundays. Entrance £3.25 adult; children 7-16, £2.25; children under 7 free. Catalogue, edited by David Starkey, Collins and Brown, 1991, 192pp, £18 and £14.99.

[Anthony Gross is a Research Fellow at the University of Kent.]

CINEMA: A QUARTERLY REVIEW

by David Shipman

PRIDE of place this time must go to *Cyrano de Bergerac*, because it is just about perfect. Edmund Rostand's play may not take the stage these days, but it has been beautifully adapted as a cinema *experience* by Jean-Paul Carriere (who used to script for Bunuel) and the director on this occasion, Jean-Paul Rappeneau. Rappeneau has made only a handful of movies over the last thirty years, since his one prior international success, *La Vie de Chateau* in 1966. You can see where the acts join, but the style is never theatrical. Gerard Depardieu is Cyrano — and he, Rappeaneau observed, led the company 'with ease and grace', which are qualities I find throughout the film. Depardieu plays with a combination of 'panache' (which is the word on his lips as he dies) and delicacy. Fustian has been brought wonderfully to life. If the direction is a little academic, we should recall that the French gave us such evocations of past times as *La Kermesse Heroique*, *Les Enfants du Paradis* and *La Belle et la Bete*: but the precedents for this particular movie are with Olivier's three Shakespeare films, with their subtle blend of action, romanticism and humour.

Dances With Wolves also seems to me a magnificent film, and if I invoke Olivier again it is because not since *Henry V* almost fifty years ago has a debuting director attacked so large a canvas with such confidence — also, let it be said, an actor playing the leading role and also reconstructing part of his country's past. I don't think Kevin Costner is any sort of genius, but he has *dared* and succeeded. For an act of foolish courage during the Civil War Lieutenant Dunbar (Costner) is sent, at his own request, to scout the Frontier. In the West he is bewildered by his drunken, possibly insane superior, and repelled by the ignorant, coarse trader who is his guide to the terrain. That terrain is fantastic, unearthly — and it therefore takes us towards the world of the samurai movie, where the magnificence and serenity of landscape finds in it only feeble or vicious misfits unable to respond, except the naive idealist, Dunbar, in thrall to some sort of personal concept, like Toshiro Mifune so often, obeying a primeval directive from his subconscious. Dunbar's subconscious is something we do not often get in American cinema.

That is why, for the first hour at least, this is a great film. The next two, in which Dunbar is adopted by the Sioux and Indianised, are more problematic, with some perhaps necessary plot devices and some preachiness. Costner has been much rewarded for this movie, with Oscars and an honorary membership of the Sioux; he has our gratitude for resuscitating the Western and, preachy or not, he has made a brave movie about *something* — about amity, peace and injustice. He has also made one which is rivetting and magnificently done, with a sweep missing from the cinema seemingly for decades.

Awakenings was a fellow-contender for the Oscar, as resolutely intended

to be both 'serious' and a crowd-pleaser. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* proved that it could be done — the presentation of mental illness — and this works similarly to get audiences on its side. Steven Zaillan's screenplay highlights one particular case from Oliver Sach's autobiographical book, in which he described how experiments with the drug L-DOPA brought life back to some clinically dead patients in 1969. That was only temporary, and with a series of grim reversals director Penny Marshall has nevertheless managed to make a 'feel good' movie. At its worst, this is manipulative, but at its best it is touching and funny — as when Leonard (Robert De Niro) insists on being filmed as he regresses, urging his doctor (Robin Williams) to 'Learn from me', or when the black orderly beams at seeing the patients starting on their cure and saying 'I think I liked them better before'. What subsequently happens, as they return to the comatose state, should hurt in every way — opening a can of worms and then having to reluctantly close it. This is a film about failure and yet its tone is life-enhancing, almost optimistic: but otherwise I think it would have stood little chance at the box-office (who wants to leave the cinema depressed?) — despite a magnificent performance by De Niro and a very good one by Williams, and since he is supposed to be Sachs under another name the portrait, despite his inability to relate to people, is close to hagiography. They are superbly supported by Gwen Nelson as De Niro's mother, Julie Kavner as Williams's assistant and Max Von Sydow as an experienced expert in using drugs as medication.

There are further distortions in another movie based on fact, *Mississippi Burning*, which concerns the FBI investigation into the killing of three Civil Rights workers in the Deep South. The FBI agents — the young bureaucrat (Willem Dafoe) in charge and a street-wise local man (Gene Hackman) — are stone-walled at every turn, and indeed are themselves candidates for murder. They draft in reinforcements for protection and eventually turn to the slimy methods of their opponents to solve the case — whereas in fact the FBI, tired of criticism and mounting expenses, offered a bribe of $30,000, which immediately brought forth an informant: but I think that would be, in the film, an anti-climax after some of the passions in view. These are summed up by the mayor, protecting the sheriff and his deputy, as 'Our niggers were very happy till these college kids came down here'. As polemic the piece is powerful; as a thriller it keeps your eyes bolted to the screen; and it is by far the most accomplished work of its director, Alan Parker.

Some killings in the past are also the starting point for Gianni Amelio's *Porte Aperto*, when in Sicily in 1937 a municipal clerk (Renzo Giovampietro) put an end to his wife, an important lawyer and the colleague who, as it turns out, loaned them his house for their rendezvous. One of the judges, Di Francesco (Gian Maria Volonte), insists on examining the assassin's past in the hope of preventing the death penalty. The film is a plea for the abolition of capital punishment (a subject in this era of terrorism much discussed in Italy), but in the event a muted one. The film was given several showings at the National Film Theatre, courtesy of the

BBC, which had bought it for showing on television: but, significantly, it was not taken by any British distributor, even after a jury headed by Ingmar Bergman had voted it the European Film Award for 1990.

I do not know whether *Interrogation* was eligible, since it was made in 1982 — but was banned in Poland, its country of origin, till last year. It is safely set back in the Polish past, in 1951, when an actress (Krystyna Janda) is thrown into jail and to her amazement questioned about her sexual activities. One of these was with an army officer the authorities wish to destroy, and once she realises this she refuses to co-operate. Her interrogators are equipped with only half-truths and lies, and she does the same: but People's Power must prevail and it can make no mistakes, so she remains in prison for years, till one interrogator departs and leaves the other with an increasingly meaningless job, casually telling her that the officer was shot long ago. As a metaphor for the Polish Communism which has now ended this is grim, strong and moving. The director, Ryszard Bugajski, has been making a living turning out mini series in Canada: on this showing, he is far too intelligent for that.

There are more messages in *The Godfather Part III*, but then this foolish, operatic enterprise wants to be seen to be profound when its not showing people being bumped off. I never understood why the first two parts of this saga are referred to as 'classics', but this brings the series to an end with a whimper, despite what seems to be the despatch by death of what seems to be every other member of the audience in the Teatro Massimo in Palermo.

For sheer fun, try *Postcards From the Edge*, directed by Mike Nichols and written by Carrie Fisher from her autobiographical book. It reminds us at once that Nichols made his name as a satirist, and the prime joy here are the devastating portraits of trumped-up Hollywood people, from an unctious producer (Rob Reiner) to a pretentious British director (Simon Callow). As the centre of the tale is a Hollywood daughter so indebted to drink and drugs that she has reduced herself to a blank, in which role Meryl Streep is well cast for once but no more interesting than she ever was; as her mother, based vaguely on Debbie Reynolds, Shirley MacLaine has a ball, an essentially nice woman but out of touch, always 'on' and reaching for her cutes when they are most not needed.

And the cutes is what *Romuald et Juliette* has in abundance, as a wretched, ruined tycoon (Daniel Auteuil) turns to the office cleaner (Firmine Richard) for help in a crisis: she is black and has five children. He had not even noticed her before and at the end he proposes marriage, which leads to two good jokes and some high spirited romance in which we can all join; but till then the writer-director is out exploring new horizons of audience incredulity. Her name is Coline Serreau, and she was the original perpetrator of *Three Men and a Baby*. You have been warned.

Literary Supplement

GOWNSMAN AND SWORDSMAN

Macmillan 1957-1986, Volume 2 of his official biography. Alistair Horne. Papermac. £14.99.

When this official biography was first produced in hardback in 1989, it was properly greeted effusively. Its appearance in paper less than two years later allows the author to take note of a number of points raised by his reviewers, of the fresh material afforded by the 30 years' rule in Britain's PRO, and by the revelations coming from the use of the Freedom of Information Act in the US. So, alike in hardback and in Papermac form, this book is valuable. In essentials it is a survey, in personal terms, of Britain's foreign policy and foreign crises over the last thirty years. Clearly Macmillan felt more at ease in foreign policy than domestic — despite the Suez crises and Eden's ill-health that led to his succession. Clearly too this was made possible only by the near-incredible loyalty to him of R. A. S. Butler, who, in reviewing Volume IV of Macmillan's *Memoirs* in the *Spectator* summed up his own role by saying that 'I was left, as so often in these pages for shorter or longer periods, holding what remained of the baby'.

Macmillan himself was, in his own words, at once gownsman and swordsman. He learnt to be an excellent swordsman at question-time in the House of Commons, and he discovered that as long as he was master there, he could triumph even over revolts in the Cabinet — over Lord Salisbury, a kinsman, over Messrs. Thornycroft, Birch and Enoch Powell — and over Frank Cousins of the TUC. (It is easier to do a deal, however, when inflation is 3%, and when he was, as a Keynesian with a vivid recall of his days as MP for Stockton-on-Tees, ready to surrender.) The gownsmanship is still more obvious: the best pieces in the book are when Alistair Horne draws on Macmillan's lovingly and amply detailed diaries, and on his notes of conversations with the great man. His book is rich in sharply-etched pen portraits of Macmillan's colleagues — and his critics. It recalls vividly his six years in Downing Street, and afterwards.

Seen now in a long retrospect, however, Macmillan's achievements seem reduced in scale. After the Suez effort in 1956 he certainly restored British morale; he won the election of 1959 handsomely, which few would have predicted three years before. He pushed the African colonies towards independence — but began as a result that long isolation of South Africa from world affairs that has cost us dearly. He restored relations with the US almost to the point of flattery — at the expense of De Gaulle's opposition and our consequent exclusion from the EEC for ten years. But through it all, in all his world travels and by mastery of the House of Commons, he did little to stimulate the domestic economy; his middle way in politics, learned twenty years before in Stockton, hid from himself the dangers of inflation and of lavish spending of public money; and the Vassaly and Profumo scandals of the early 1960s suddenly showed him up not as an Edwardian grandee with an effortless superiority, but as a tired old man out of touch with the somewhat raffish world that occasionally laps at the door of Westminster. Deep down, and below the parts he played, he was at heart the Puritan his Scottish great-

grandfather had been, and even his cynicism could not quite grasp the tone of the rather sleazy world of the 1960s. Moreover, his retirement from the Prime Ministership because of ill-health in 1963, was badly timed, and may not have been necessary; and the task — complex enough in itself — of finding a successor was made much more difficult when played out in the searchlights of TV cameras trained on a party conference. He had a splendid career, but he made mistakes and left things undone. But this is a thoroughly-researched and highly readable study of a great political actor-manager.

ESMOND WRIGHT

DIPLOMATIC WIVES

Partners in Diplomacy. Beryl Smedley. The Harley Press. 1990. 214pp.

This beautifully produced and illustrated story of the supportive service by those unsung women who have supported their diplomatic husbands for over 200 years is appositely told by Lady Smedley, a New Zealander, herself a marriage-long member of the corps. From published and private sources, she lays before us the lives of the well known like Lady Mary Wortley in the 18th century, and also many unknowns, who faced danger, loneliness and hardwork; lives which even more than the Army and the Church demanded rigid etiquette, with little solace in occasional glamour.

Originally, wealthy aristocrats chosen by the King to represent him abroad, the diplomat today is a competitive careerist, though until 1919 he was expected to have a private income. There are some delightful vignettes of these, though oddly not of Richard Burton, one of England's more eccentric emissaries. His dictum to Isabella: pay, pack and follow applied to every diplomatic wife, whose unpaid and wholetime service was taken for granted by the FO.

Indeed outside activities were not encouraged. Ann Bridge, Lady Malley, did manage to become a successful novelist. But Lady Kelly was firmly told an ambassadress's job was arranging dinners, not writing books. During the 1970s the role of diplomatic wife has become a burning and a fiery issue. For one thing, the incredible speed up of communications and travel from Donkey to FAX has altered the role of diplomacy beyond imagination. The man and woman on the spot no longer have to make vital decisions and endure the long agony of separation and sickness; though one might say they have only exchanged typhoid for terrorism and hostage taking. Not that even this is new. Napoleon kidnapped Lord Elgin and his wife and held them hostage for three years.

Secondly, women no longer accept lives completely absorbed in their husbands' career. They often have their own and the cool assumption that they will give up is no longer valid. Vita Sackville West became the first outstanding rebel when she refused to accompany her husband Harold Nicholson abroad. He found the going so hard, he finally resigned the service.

Today the working or gainfully employed diplomatic wife is no longer a phenomenon — she may even be a diplomat in her own right. But the diplomatic wife still has to get official recognition, though the Diplomatic Wives Association works hard to maintain the partnership ideal sweetened by financial aid for official entertainment. But as one wife ruefully admitted: except for praise in her husbands valedictory despatch, her only mention is

likely to be a line at the bottom of his obituary notice: He is survived by his wife.

There could be no greater contrast than Manchester University Press's expensive (£38) production in their series Studies in Imperialism called the *Empire and Sexuality* by Ronald Hyam, 1990.

There is little left out, indeed it makes the habits of the Trobriand islanders sound like a Sunday Teaparty. Much horrid detail of female circumcision is included as well as speculation about the private proclivities of Monty and General Gordon. The line of connection is the memsahib. Mr. Hyam sees the memsahib as general scapegoat, a lesser Mrs. Hauksbee responsible for the trail of deteriorating race relations. The gap between the two worlds portrayed by these two books makes them sound like two other worlds. But while Hyam has chapter headings like 'Buggery in Buganda', it seems likely his book will reach a wider public than its scholarship intended!

MOLLY MORTIMER

IS THERE A CHANGE?

And None Afraid — Soviet-Western Suspicion and Trusting from Red October to Glasnost Dialogue. H. T. Bernstein. Baardwell, Oxford, 1991, 240pp.

The author, an American lecturer who has settled in England and is an active Quaker, is trying to promote the notion that organised and unorganised meetings and discussions between private citizens of the Soviet Union and Western countries could create a climate of mutual trust that would in the end improve relations and lead to disarmament and co-operation. He starts off by explaining the historic facts of the Russian feeling of being both special and isolated and lists the conflicts with the West that produced the Cold War and the relaxation that has followed Gorbachev taking over the Kremlin.

He then gives a detailed account of the little known activities of the various official, semi-official and private organizations that encourage and promote relations with the Soviet Union, sometimes with figures on visas and exchanges starting before the last war. He believes passionately that all this matters but has to admit that Soviet participants in meetings and discussions were briefed in advance and rehearsed answers to expected questions. He believes that 'independent self-preparation' linked with 'autonomous study groups, adult education workshops' will help, like discussing the Leninist doctrine that private employment of larger groups of workers is a 'crime'. He regards the opening of East-West Cultural Exchange as really important.

He lists twelve main reasons, as he sees it, for East-West distrust over some 70 years of conflict. Since he claims 30 years of contacts with Soviet citizens the list is of interest and it shows an uncertain bias in favour of the Soviets. The Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 is not in the list but 'failing a diversionary action front early enough' (Churchill and Roosevelt 1942-1943) is. The currency reform in West Germany that ended inflation is balanced against the blockade of Berlin and US support of the 1961 failed Bay of Pigs, the invasion of Cuba against the Soviets crushing Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

His detailed accounts are useful however. There is a certain irony in his report on the conflict arising from the dispatch of British and other Allied troops to Russia at the end of World War I when the Bolsheviks were

fighting for their survival. Lord Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, stated in November 1918, for instance, that the presence of British soldiers in Russia did not mean 'that Britain had a mission to promote any particular political system among the Russian people' and Lord Milner added that the last thing the British government desired 'was to leave British soldiers in Russia a day longer than necessary to discharge moral obligations that Britain had incurred'. The British left and Lenin survived. President Wilson assured the Russian people that the presence of American troops in Siberia or Northern Russia meant that the US would not interfere with the political sovereignty of Russia. One cannot help thinking of the Stalin of today, Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

The detailed account of Soviet-Western relations in the Cold War period is interesting and so are some facts that illustrate the enormous difficulties the Western powers have to face when mapping out aid to the Soviet Union. There are, for instance, 195,000 Co-operatives employing around five million people to think of when considering a system of shares, as in western industries to be introduced. The public sector of the Soviet economy makes up 85% and the private one 15%. The private sector is made up of the plots peasants are allowed to have and of small Service enterprises. The US economy has a 25% public and a 75% private sector. The author's idea is gradually to change this proportion in the Soviet economy. He reports that opinion polls show that 38% still support the Communist system and 27% reject it while 35% withhold their opinion, double that in Western countries. This shows, of course, that people are still afraid.

The author maintains that there have been six revolutions in Russia: the introduction of Duma, Parliament, after the defeat by Japan in 1905; the February 1917 Revolution that brought in the doomed Kerensky Regime; the coup by Lenin and Trotsky in October 1917 that created the Soviet system; Stalin's terror 1928/29; Khrushchev's attempts 1953 and, lastly, Gorbachev taking over the Kremlin in 1985.

Like many others the author believes that Gorbachev realized that the Soviet Union could no longer afford holding Eastern Europe and that the Stalinist-Leninist Central Command System of the economy had failed to bring in innovation, high technology and the adequate production of consumer goods. Like many others too, the author is doubtful about the chances of success of the Gorbachev reforms and feels that exchanges between citizens could help greatly.

He has, however, underrated the power and the interests of the Soviet industrial-military complex; that in 1991, for instance, according to US sources, ten new nuclear submarines have been launched. He ignores too the vital factor of the many, and powerful nations and ethnic groups that make up the Soviet Union. A new situation is emerging. Gorbachev has only been able to get nine of the 15 Soviet republics to prepare a new Soviet system. He has not hinted even what he intends to do about the Six that have refused to attend the meetings even, the three Baltics, Georgia, Armenia and Moldava on the Romanian border. Again as the Russian President, Yeltsin, has indicated, he, and the others, like the Ukraine that is now electing its own President, want to control their own taxes and their own industries, selling abroad on their own accounts. And curiously, Western businessmen who have started to negotiate with Soviet industries report privately that the people they talk to are all Communist Party members who dress and behave, as one source told me, 'as if they had just come from Wall Street'.

Aid for the Soviet Union, and we do not know in what form it will survive because Gorbachev himself has warned about the death of the System, will prove a dangerously uncertain experiment. The author helps, in a small way, to provide a background to the questions.

LEO MURAY

A CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW

Christians in a New Europe. David L. Edwards. Collins. £4.99.

In the Preface to this book, the author writes: 'In 1990 there seems to be a need for a short book which tries to discuss the immense changes which have begun to make a new Europe, in the light of history and from a Christian viewpoint. This is such a book'. So it is, but that deceptively simple statement obscures both the enormity of the task, which the author has set himself, and the magisterial competence with which he has tackled it. On reading it, I was reminded of Dr. Johnson's words in *The Vanity of Human Wishes,* where he said, 'Let observation with extensive view, survey mankind from China to Peru', for if David Edwards has not cast his scholarly eye over quite such a vast landscape, the field he has covered is almost equally wide.

He does not confine himself, as the title of his book might suggest, to the possibilities opened up by the emergence of a new Europe for the achievement of a greater unity between the churches after centuries of bickering, distrust, and mutual vilification, although he does indeed have a look at the birth and growth of the ecumenical movement and at the way in which it could develop, as the nations, which once constituted Christendom, approach each other cautiously after nearly a thousand years of war, nationalism, and imperialist rivalry; nor does he confine himself to describing the contribution made by Christians and Christianity in the past to the kind of world in which we all find ourselves in the 1990s, or to the contributions which they could make to the new world, which seems to be emerging from the wreckage of the old, if they prove to be flexible enough to take the opportunities which they are likely to meet in the process; though once again he looks at both subjects. He spends at least as much time — more, indeed — discussing the problems and opportunities arising out of such things as a common agricultural policy and industrial competition in a hugely enlarged market and their effects on the smaller nations taking part as well as on the Third World countries and their future development. Similarly, he looks at the political difficulties which will almost inevitably arise during the process of forging greater unity between the nation states of Europe, and at such questions as whether some measure of uniformity will have to be forged out of the various national legal, educational, and medical systems. What will happen when and if such countries as Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and even perhaps Russia, which were shaped and formed by Christianity just as much as — say — France or England, express a desire to join the greater community? Should they be welcomed, and if so how? All this and much more comes within his purview.

But let no one think that, in trying to cover such a huge territory, the author succumbs to triviality; he never does so. On the contrary, he seems to tackle each subject, as it arises, as though he had spent half his life studying it and the other half perfecting a way in which to write about it, which is always lucid, invariably balanced, and never boring. I have no doubt that readers will disagree with some of the things he says; one of the reasons why

the book is so stimulating is that he does not hesitate to challenge currently orthodox opinion, whether it be political, economic or religious orthodoxy which is in question. My only complaint, if it can be called that, is that, while I found David Edwards' optimism immensely refreshing in a world more accustomed to doom and gloom — pollution, destruction of the rain forests, extinction of animal species, over-population, starvation, civil war, and so on — sometimes he seemed to me to become over-optimistic almost to the point of being euphoric. For instance, he is right to say that Third World countries, if they are to compete with Europe, 'need efficient and uncorrupt governments... stable prices... a wide dispersal of ownership of land... schemes for training, low cost credit, storage, and distribution' and a good deal else; but a quick look at such countries as Ethiopia, the Sudan, Mozambique, and half a dozen others does not encourage me to think that those needs will be easily satisfied. But let me not discourage anyone from reading this book. It is a remarkable achievement and should be compulsory reading for members of all churches, whatever their denomination, and hopefully for many non-churchgoers too.

TONY BRIDGE

A HISTORY OF STRONGHOLDS IN BRITAIN

Castles & Strongholds. Richard Muir. Macmillan, London.

Richard Muir has described and classified the many castles and other strongholds in Britain as they related initially to the defence needs either of the country or the local population. He also connects each one with particular events in national history. He begins his study with early hillforts and earthworks from the Iron and Bronze Ages, round which parishes and communities developed for their own protection.

Later castles, whilst becoming increasingly elaborate in structure, were still often used for household protection and sometimes for the private army of a powerful baron. Dr. Muir has collated much evidence of the changes in use, as for instance an increase in grandeur whilst yet maintaining a strong military presence in the fourteen castles along the Welsh Marches. These were used not only to restrain border forays but also to repel the invader from the sea. The Welsh castles enjoyed a peculiar status over the whole range of strongholds throughout the mediaeval period, for their owners had been ordered by Henry VI, in 1403, to supply and fortify their castles at their own expense, so that certain princes tried to establish a dynastic claim. The Scottish Border fortifications had a chequered history for similar reasons whilst guarding border limits in particularly difficult territory.

Communities surrounding many great castles continued to exist after their military function ended: they became the country houses of the nobility and other wealthy families. (One of the last country houses built in external imitation of a thirteenth century fortified dwelling is Castle Drogo in Devon, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and erected between 1911 and 1930.)

There are excellent black and white photographs, including a view of the well preserved ramparts of Maiden Castle in Dorset whose complex earthworks could accommodate horses and cattle as well as villagers and soldiers. The author has made a survey both authoritative and pleasant to read. I have

only one complaint: Sandgate Castle, one of Henry VIII's important coastal defence castles, has not 'fallen into the sea'. Its garrison has within the past ten years been superbly restored by the private owners who have recently also uncovered Henry VIII's counting house intact. It contained the records of the names and weekly wages of the stonemasons and bricklayers who built the castle.

BETTY ABEL

SHORTER REVIEWS

A Very Close Conspiracy. Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf. (Jonathan Cape. £16.99.) Jane Dunn has written the story of the relationship between two sisters, each complementing the other as to temperament and artistic gifts. The author insists that her book is not a biography of either one but traces through their eventful and celebrated lives their strong mutual affection and ever present sympathy and support. This invisible but unbreakable 'golden thread' persisted even after both sisters were married. The book is illuminating even though there are many authoritative family biographies already familiar to admirers of Virginia's novels and essays: Vanessa's personal life has, however, been less often chronicled. Jane Dunn makes the astute deduction that there was a mutual sexual jealousy between them which did nothing to destroy their unusually close relationship. What comes out most clearly in this respect is their continuous affection for and dependence on one another in the face of Virginia's unwarranted love affair with her sister's husband. Many facets of both their characters are revealed, each clearly known to the other, in a way that no previous biographical account has been able to show.

The Haunting of Lamb House. (Jonathan Cape. £12.00.) Joan Aiken writes an imaginative story in three parts, in which the chief character is the house in Rye which Henry James first rented and later bought, against the wishes of his dominating brother, William. It is a ghost story but, unlike most other well known visitations, the phantom was in some way sensed and even seen by Henry James himself and by other inhabitants of the house from the eighteenth century, when Toby Lamb built and christened the house, to its early twentieth century tenants. These were mainly literary friends of Henry James — the two Benson Brothers for instance. (Their father was then Archbishop of Canterbury!) It is well done. It should interest especially all who know the house in its new guise of a much visited, carefully preserved Georgian house.

Edith Wharton. (Women Writers. Macmillan. £25.00 hardcover, £7.99 paperback.) A reassessment of the novels and stories of Edith Wharton is long overdue, according to the writers and the general editors of the Women Writers series. Katherine Joslin has written a cogently argued and well supported account of the worth of Wharton's writing. She shows its place in both American and English literature and gives plausible reasons for its neglect, not all of them based on sex differences. Even so, it is clear from the examples she cites of the strictures by male critics (notably Ernest Lubbock, that much acclaimed authority on the art of novel writing) on her work that they attribute it to some kind of feminine stress and its necessary outlet. Henry James, how-

ever, thought highly of her novels. This book is well worth reading. It contains an excellent bibliography and good notes.

The Christian Year. (Thames and Hudson. £12.95.) This 'companion for those who observe, or are interested in, the annual round of the ecclesiastical year', compiled by J. C. J. Metford is welcome. The author is concerned to 'discuss origins, to give reasons, and to suggest the theological justification of festivals which in some instances have proved controversial'. There is a short bibliography of books in English only. The text itself is not annotated. This is in effect a popular account which the general reader will appreciate. The author fairly concedes that 'the history of festivals in the first eight centuries continues to be the subject of revision'. He no doubt appreciates that there is now statutory power to declare a fixed Easter when there is sufficient and suitable public support.

The Letters of T. E. Lawrence. (Oxford University Press. £8.95.) It is good to have a paperback edition of this excellent volume of Lawrence's letters selected and edited by Malcolm Brown. It includes letters already published, for example from David Garnett's volumes published in 1938. More particularly, Malcolm Brown has brought together a large number of letters from the 'substantial collection' in the Oxford Bodleian Library which 'has provided the central core of the present book'. Malcolm Brown has made it his 'prime task to choose letters which seemed to cast light on the remarkable if elusive personality that was T. E. Lawrence/ J. H. Ross/ T. E. Shaw'. He has also written useful Introductions to each of seven phases in T.E.L.'s life and career.

Southwold River. (Suffolk Books. £12.95.) This study of 'Georgian Life in the Blyth Valley' by Rachel Lawrence, is based upon the communities in East Anglia during the nineteenth century, with particular references to Southwold and Halesworth. They were times of busy industry, of prosperous ports and trade. The author is much concerned with the lives and character of the inhabitants, with the inevitable sharp social divisions, and the changes brought on by industrial decline. The volume makes excellent reading. There is one omission although strictly outside the scope of her study. Readers, particularly in the United States would have enjoyed an account of the founding in Long Island of the daughter town of Southold. The links still continue.

The Priory of Cartmel. (Cicerone Press, Cumbria.) This is a beautifully produced and illustrated history of Cartmel Priory in Lancashire which dates from the 12th century, and survived the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536. The author, the Rev. Dr. J. C. Dickinson, divides his study into two parts. The first is concerned with the history of and life in the monastery, founded by Austin Canons. The second part discusses with numerous illustrations the superb architecture, monuments, and beautiful glass and windows of the church. It is certainly a volume which should be greatly appreciated, albeit within a narrow compass.

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Contents *Page*

Travelling Through Perestroika: Across the USSR by Bicycle	Simon Vickers	113
Misguided Nationalism: the Causes and Prospects for Slovenian Independence	Ronen Palan	119
Transatlantic Eavesdropping: Minnesota by Air	Tim Gebbels	128
Banks to Control Mediterranean Pollution	Thomas Land	133
Art in Hospitals	J. H. Baron and M. F. R. Miles	137
Sylvia Plath: A Balance of Loss and Gain	Patrick Wakeling	142
Public Libraries in England	Eric Glasgow	147
Teaching Contemporary History	Sarah Newman	151
Five Poems: At Nimrud, Iraq **Kuwait: A Memory** **Al-Ukhaidir, Iraq** **Ashurbanipal** **Desert Thoughts**	Raymond Tong	154
Cornwall in History and Literature	A. L. Rowse	157
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT Esmond Wright, A. D. Harvey, Richard Mullen, Bruce Pattison, Richard Whittington-Egan.		161
SHORTER REVIEW		168

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TRAVELLING THROUGH PERESTROIKA: ACROSS THE USSR BY BICYCLE

by Simon Vickers

CYCLING 12,000 kilometres from Leningrad to Vladivostock is a challenge few people would relish. But to witness *perestroika* personally, first hand, and to travel in a way that would facilitate contact with ordinary Russians convinced me that there could be no better way to experience the Soviet Union. Even today, the Soviet Union does not encourage independent visitors. Not trusting its own citizens to travel freely abroad, nor foreigners to explore within its borders, the USSR has adopted a foreign policy that, curiously, combines isolationism with the foreign interventionism typical of a world power.

The Soviet authorities make it as difficult and expensive as possible for any foreigner who desires to travel independently in the USSR with the aim of dissuading him from coming altogether. Accommodation has to be booked in advance, the exact route and timetable agreed in advance, and changes are rarely allowed. It took my colleagues and me one and a half years of negotiations before we were granted permission to cycle across the USSR, camping and staying in hotels as it suited us, with nothing reserved in advance. It was only because we professed to be 'sportsmen' that such a journey was allowed at all. The Soviet Union we saw was very different from the one most tourists, restricted to Moscow, Leningrad and Samarkand, usually see. On arrival in Leningrad we found initial accommodation had been arranged for us in an unmarked building on the edge of the city, half-brothel, half-hotel, that was reserved for Communist Party elite or *nomenklatura*.

Even with *glasnost*, we had to have a Soviet cyclist accompany us. At first we feared that he would be under instructions to report our activities to the authorities and possibly even to restrict our contacts with ordinary Soviet citizens. Our fears were unfounded: Vitale proved to be no admirer of the Soviet system. Through him we met Leningraders and were invited to their homes for meals and birthday parties where we heard of a catalogue of injustices, of corruption, of mismanagement and waste that had left Leningrad short of food and consumer goods of every description. Cheese, windscreen wipers, colour film and vodka were the latest items unavailable anywhere in the city. Our friends distilled their own alcoholic spirit, *samogon*, in a cramped bathroom, relied on tip-offs from friends about

deliveries of scarce food products, bought and traded goods they didn't need for others they did, and somehow managed to cope with perennial shortages and Soviet bureaucracy. No one appeared to have faith in Gorbachev or the future. Gorbachev, we were told, was a masterful politician, who successfully duped the West but did nothing to improve the life of people at home.

In April Leningrad was cold and snow still lay on the ground as we set out for Moscow. Despite the acute shortage of vegetables in Leningrad there were no market gardens outside the city. Wheatfields and pine forest stretched to the horizon and, while little work was being done on the Collective farms, people were busy on their private one acre plots. We didn't have long to go before we came across the old image of Russia — traditional wooden cabins, listing and black with age, surrounded by their woodstack, well and vegetable plot. But the historical focus of the traditional Russian community — the church — had gone in almost every village, either demolished, in ruins, or turned into fertiliser stores, mechanical workshop or shops. Nor did it appear that anything had arisen to take its place.

Food shortages were blamed on the fact that there was little system of accountability on the collective farms or in the warehouses that served them. Agricultural machinery lay in the rain, rusting and uncared for. Farm-workers ploughed the fields very lightly so that they could finish their work early and get back to their vegetable plots. The vegetable warehouse managers were able to abuse their position, selling vegetables illegally *na levo,* on the side, and if they rotted they were not held responsible. Near Sverdlovsk a massive potato harvest had rotted in the fields: disorganization was such that there were neither the sacks, nor the trucks, in which to transport them. We arrived in Moscow on May Day, traditionally one of the highlights of the Communist calendar, that is usually celebrated with impressive military parades in Red Square, thousands of massed gymnasts and docile flag-waving crowds. Instead, for the first time since the Revolution, there was no military display and opposition groups were allowed to take part. Waving placards calling on Gorbachev to resign, and to give Lithuania its independence, chanting demonstrators forced Gorbachev to withdraw early from Red Square — an event without precedent in Soviet history. But despite the flags, the balloons, the piped music, there was a chilling note. Beneath ground, in the passageways under 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution Square, thousands of armed troops stood at the ready: evidence that even *glasnost* had its limits. As we arrived, Moscow's political history was being made. A non-Communist university professor, Gavrill Popov, was elected as mayor of Moscow when the reform-minded 'Democratic Russia' group swept the board in local elections, depriving the Communist Party of control of the city for the first time since the Revolution.

Moscow, outside the Kremlin, remains a somewhat foreboding city with thousands of identical concrete apartment blocks stretching out like military barracks in all directions. A few changes were visible of the

nascent Westernization: an Estee Lauder shop had opened in Gorky Street and every day crowds of hundreds waited patiently for their turn to enter. Muscovites appeared to have a hearty dislike for the few privatised restaurants that had appeared as a result of more liberal laws encouraging private business. Serving meals that cost the equivalent of a monthly pension or more, they were too expensive for all but the rapidly expanding number of black marketeers, identifiable by their black leather jackets, foreign clothes, and the ease with which they enter and leave Moscow's luxury hotels, from which ordinary Russians are barred. Buying and selling goods illegally acquired *na levo*, on the side, some young black marketeers were making 20,000 rubles a year, compared with the average national wage of 3,000. Professional academics had taken to driving taxis, despairing at their official salaries and many people were trying to hold down two jobs to make ends meet.

From Moscow, we set out across European Russia to the Urals, traversing 2,500 kilometres of silver birch forest and wheatfield. Although European Russia is a major cereal and food producing area, food was scarce in the shops and meat rarely available. Local village shops, bedraggled and half empty, offered a meagre selection of tinned fish, old bottled juice, loose biscuits, macaroni, and bread. Milk, eggs, sugar and butter were occasionally for sale in these shops, fresh vegetables and fruit virtually never. Cheese we saw four times in six months, oranges once (but sold out), and a single banana but once. As summer arrived tomatoes, potatoes and cabbage became available but for most of the time we were dependent on what we could buy in the villages. Fortunately, the country dwellers were generous in the extreme, almost always refusing any payment, but meat was something they had little of themselves and were unable to help with. It is not for nothing that the Russians refer to the area before the Urals as 'the Hungry Regions'.

Penza, Ryazan, Toliatti and Ufa were large cities, twentieth-century, largely built of concrete, streaked and grey. Any old quarters appeared to have been consumed in the epidemic of construction that characterizes Soviet development since the 1930s. It was the sheer ugliness of the cities that came as a rude shock; aesthetic considerations, landscape gardening, sympathetic adaptation according to local conditions and materials play no part in Soviet construction policy. It was not hard to believe the story of the Swedish architect who had had to cut short his trip after one week, overwhelmed by the ugliness of Soviet architecture. Although in a few cities, like Irkutsk, some old town houses have been preserved, in most they are still being pulled down to make way for high-rise apartment blocks that European countries decided were socially undesirable twenty years ago. When I asked why such blocks were still being put up, I was merely told 'this is our building policy'. But with piped hot water and central heating out of the question in the old wooden houses, apartments in the massive blocks are in high demand. Even the largest cities had very few recreational facilities, let alone cafes and restaurants. Wine was periodically available and beer very rarely, alcoholic consumption having

been cut back drastically in 1987 on Gorbachev's orders. The goal had been to reduce the prevalent alcoholism, so evident in the USSR, but the result had been a massive blow to government finances, tax on alcohol being the second major source of government revenue.

The Urals were disappointing. Low, unimpressive, pine clad hills, they are no more than a fictional barrier between Europe and Asia. One or five thousand kilometres east of the Urals, Soviet culture and living conditions were little different from that west of the Urals. Ufa, Magnitogorsk, Sverdlovsk (the home town of Boris Yeltsin), were large industrial cities, producing poor quality steel and metal products fit only for Soviet or Third World consumption. These industrial cities, built in the thirties by prisoners sent to the labour camps by Stalin, had a sad, foreboding atmosphere, as if haunted by their original builders, tens of thousands of whom died in the process. 'We call our city, "the city of bones",' a young man told us in Magnitogorsk. Intelligent and quick, Igor, might have been a barrister or a successful businessman in the West, but in the Soviet Union, he rented out poor quality copies of American videos, such as Schwarznegger's 'Running Man', 'Rambo', and 'Star Wars', to Soviet hotels. Meeting Igor, one was conscious of a terrible waste of human talent, of the stifling lack of opportunities, of the overwhelming blanket of inertia that kept people in their place in the USSR.

Magnitogorsk was polluted, terribly polluted, hundreds of blackened chimneys sending forth a steady stream of black and rusty orange-grey smoke. Our hotel, the Hotel Asia, was located right next to the steel works, beside a gargantuan statue of Lenin pointing to the blackened sky. By the time we left in the morning our lips were dry and cracking and our skin felt pinched and drawn. Magnitogorsk, a massive industrial city, had only two hotels, both five kilometres from the city centre. There were two restaurants and at both the food was barely edible. To supplement a very inadequate diet, we scoured the town, searching in vain for nutritious food in shops and markets.

Up to the Urals, we had hoped to come across some sign of thriving Russian culture, of living tradition, of cultural continuity with the past. But for the best part of a thousand years Russian culture was synonymous with the Russian Orthodox Church and in destroying the church, the Communist Party effectively put an end to traditional culture. The new philosophy was construction, the building of a radiant future. Culture was seen as a means to an end, rather than as the spontaneous creation of a free spirit. The Soviet Union adopted a new religion — the religion of fervent production. Maximizing industrial output, catching up economically with the West, fulfilling the Five Year Plans, outweighed all other considerations. As a result, the development of the individual was discounted and Soviet culture became trammelled by the need to conform to goals set by the state. Such an authoritarian strain is typical of the Russian politic but Soviet culture was squeezed in the process. We saw little evidence of cultural innovation or creativity. Instead we heard, from many people, of how Soviet culture had been led into a cul-de-sac.

Beyond the Urals we cycled south into Kazakhstan, finding ourselves in country even flatter than European Russia. Not a swell, not a wave interrupted 2,500 kilometres of wheatfield and steppe grazed by massive herds of cattle or horses tended by bare-footed Kazakh horsemen. For a month our road narrowed to a speck on the horizon, never appearing to get any closer. Villages and towns were far apart: for fifty kilometres or more not a single building or village was to be seen. And yet, despite wheatfields that stretched as far as from London to Rome, the harvest was destined to be poor. Unpredictable and insufficient rainfall combined with poor agricultural management, an unmotivated workforce and unserviced machinery meant that the USSR would lose one-third of its grain harvest. The deportation of other nations to Kazakhstan in the 1930s and 40s by Stalin had upset the ethnic balance of the region. Khrushchev's hasty decision to plough up the Kazakh steppe in the 'Virgin Lands Scheme' had led to over-exhaustion of the soil, and the reversal of rivers flowing into the Aral Sea to irrigate cotton production had created one of the world's largest ecological disasters — the partial evaporation of the Aral Sea and consequent devastation of a vast region. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Kazakhs were keen to establish their own Republic on a separate footing, and were moving faster than the Russian Republic to a free-market economy.

Three months after arriving at Leningrad we reached Siberia. Contrary to widespread belief Siberia is not always cold. In July, the thermometer hovered at 39 degrees centigrade. From Barnaul, we pushed east through the Novokuznetsk range but the secondary road marked on our US satellite maps disappeared into the River Tom, leaving us to push along the Trans-Siberian railway track for days until we descended to Abakan, close to the Mongolian border. Siberia, itself larger than mainland USA, stretched ahead of us for 6,000 kilometres, a mixture of dense pine and fir forest and open land, cleared for agriculture. It was with immense relief that we climbed into Siberian hills, thinking we had left the monotonous wheatfields of Kazakhstan behind us. But from time to time vast areas of wheatland unfolded before us, to haunt our progress. Abakan and Krasnoyarsk were closed cities and our arrival led to minor difficulties, but the KGB appeared more concerned to find us better accommodation than to punish us.

We suffered more from sheer physical exertion combined with inadequate food which drained us of energy than from the KGB. From Krasnoyarsk, the French team member flew back to Moscow, suffering from exhaustion. Roads were bad, food poor in quality and deficient in protein and vitamins, and beyond Nerchinsk in Siberia, even unmetalled tracks gave out, leaving us with over a thousand kilometres of swamp to negotiate. Strange as it may seem, despite Soviet military and space technology, there is still not even a single road across the country. For a month we cycled, pushed, and negotiated our way across the swamp north of the Amur River that forms the boundary with China.

In this remote area lie settlements, largely forgotten, made up of

ex-Gulag camp prisoners. In one such village, 30% of the inhabitants had been released from the camps of which fifteen were located within an hour's drive. But, once freed, many prisoners had decided to stay in Siberia, rather than returning to European Russia. Out of sheer necessity, Siberians are survivors. Or perhaps it would be closer to the truth to say that those who survive the camps have a strength, an independence and a resilience quite different from Russians who live in the European part of the country. 'Communism?' one embittered man who had spent ten years in a labour camp told me, 'Communism is worse than Fascism. Believe me, I've seen them both'. Captured by the Germans in World War II, he had been sentenced to the Soviet labour camps as punishment for having surrendered. He was lucky; others suffered worse fates.

Although conditions in Siberia are rough and rudimentary, there is still a pioneer spirit, a comradeship, a strength of spirit that was lacking in European Russia. Tempted by salaries four or five times as high as those in the west of the USSR many people settle and stay in the growing Siberian towns and cities. The untamed Taiga, the endless forests, with their mushrooms, berries and wild flowing rivers, appeal strongly to the Russian spirit.

Beyond the swamp, we passed through the Autonomous Jewish Republic, a remote region that was allocated to the Jews but never became their homeland, and cycled 1,000 kilometres south, passing through Khabarovsk towards Vladivostock. When we had originally negotiated with the Soviet authorities, we had been told that Vladivostock was a closed city which we would not be able to visit. But we tried our luck and cycled unmolested into the heart of the city, the base of the Soviet Pacific Fleet, where battleships and cruisers cluttered the quays. Located on steep hills around a magnificent natural port, Vladivostock has the makings of another Hong Kong, with its Siberian hinterland as large as the USA. But for the moment, the Soviet military prevents any opening of the city and international flights remain banned, even though Japan is only one hour's flight away.

Local residents looked astonished to see us. On learning that we had cycled from Leningrad, one woman fumbled in her handbag to find a present. She pulled out a bottle opener, apologising for not having any better present. 'It's the perfect present,' I assured her. 'All we want to do now is celebrate.' 'I'm afraid that will be difficult,' she replied. 'You won't find any beer in our city.'

[*Between the Hammer and the Sickle. Across Russia by Cycle* by Simon Vickers will be published by Sinclair-Stevenson Ltd, on November 4.]

MISGUIDED NATIONALISM: THE CAUSES AND PROSPECTS FOR SLOVENIAN INDEPENDENCE

by Ronen Palan

ALTHOUGH the situation in Yugoslavia has been deteriorating progressively for the past five years, the ferocity of fighting and ethnic violence which followed Slovenia and Croatia's declaration of independence on the 25th of June 1991 took everyone by surprise.[1] The unrest in Yugoslavia represents, however, the culmination of a long period in which nationalist rhetoric and symbolic acts took precedence over prudence and rational calculations. In an eerie reminder of the events that led to the First World War, Yugoslavia has been sliding sluggishly and thoughtlessly into what may prove to be a bloody civil war. The irony is that all six republics as well as the federal agencies profess to be striving towards precisely the same goals: democracy and market reforms on the one hand, and de-centralization and national self-determination, on the other.[2]

Since *all* parties have already reached a relatively high level of unanimity over the principle issues,[3] it is all the more perplexing that war seems nearly unavoidable. It is not surprising therefore that many foreign observers lay much of the blame for the unrest and possible outbreak of civil war in Yugoslavia at the feet of irresponsible and inexperienced politicians.

This article will focus on the Slovenian secessionist movement. It takes a critical view of the tactics of the Slovenian leadership which in its uncompromising stance has brought about the spectre of civil war and economic collapse.[4] It also takes a dim view of the opportunistic policies carried out by Austria who emerged in recent months as the main force backing Slovenia and Croatia's independence. In contrast to the recklessness of some of the regional actors, I believe both the EC and the USA have pursued well-informed and sophisticated policies aiming at the resolution of the crisis through peaceful means.

Whereas on the face of it the Slovenian independence movement appears to be a conventional nationalist movement, the reality is much more complicated. A new democratically elected government came to being in Slovenia in April 1990. This government, named 'Demos', consists of a coalition of parties ranging from the Greens and social democrats on the left, to right wing Christian democrats. It holds roughly eighty per cent of the Slovenian Parliamentary seats. As the Communists before it, Demos is committed to democratic reforms and to the establishment of a market economy. The feeling in Slovenia, however, is that the southern republics, Serbia in particular, where the old communist boss Slobodan Milosevic was re-elected, stands in its way of accomplishing these structural reforms.

Milosevic distinguished himself in the eyes of the Serbian public because of his uncompromising attitude towards the national aspirations of the

Albanian majority in Kosovo.[5] His repressive policies led to justified fear and suspicion throughout Yugoslavia of Serbian attempts at domination. The combined effect of the fear of Serbian nationalism on the one hand, and the yearning for swift moves towards reforms and democracy, on the other, convinced the publics of both Slovenia and Croatia that they are better off going it alone, unhindered and unhampered by the southern republics. It is important to understand, however, that although chauvinism and racism are in evidence, Slovenia's, and to a lesser extent Croatia's independence movement aim principally to create a modern well run capitalist state on the western European model. The hopes and aspirations of the Slovenian peoples are summed up in the phrase, repeated again and again: we are 'joining with Europe'. Slovenia would certainly like to become a member of the EC, but more to the point, it wishes to create a European society: orderly, pluralistic and democratic with a high standard of living.

Given the aspirations of the Slovenian people, it is interesting to ask why their attainment is taking the form of calls for national self-determination.

Yugoslavian politics is an intricate amalgam of facts, fiction, perceptions and rhetoric, combined together with a good deal of wishful thinking. In Yugoslavian politics the 'facts' tell only part of the story. It is a fact, however, that Yugoslavia is the most 'artifical' political entity in Europe. It combines within a relatively small area nine nations, six republics and two autonomous regions,[6] four languages, three religions and a history of enmity and mutual distrust. The centrifugal tendencies inherent in such polity were enshrined in the Yugoslav law under the so-called Kardelj constitution of 1974.[7]

The ruling group surrounding Tito understood well that following his death none of them would be able to command his power. They have opted, therefore, for second best, dividing the spoils among themselves on republican lines. Although Yugoslavia under the 1974 constitution remained formally a federal state, the constitution laid down the basis for what is in practice a confederate structure as the six republics and the two autonomous regions were each granted what amounts to a separate central bank.

The constitution lay dormant ticking away like a time bomb waiting for Tito's death. When this took place in 1980 its inner logic began to assert itself. The new constitution in effect shielded the republics from each other and from the federal government, multiplying by a factor of eight the opportunities for corruption and fraud. The republican central banks were not (and are still not) operating on a sound financial footing, and have become sources of capital to be given at will. Thus, political contacts, favouritism and nepotism over-ruled sound financial considerations.

The 'feudalization' of Yugoslavia on (con)federate lines created what Professor Turk of Ljublijana's Law Faculty describes as 'Mafia politics': an alliance of the upper echelon of the banks, industry and the communist party who gradually began to treat state industries as sources for private

accumulation. The whole (con)federate power structure gradually began to behave as a huge swindling machine transferring public earnings to private pockets and generating inflation in the process. As investment and borrowing were more likely to be directed by political rather than economic considerations, and as profits were creamed off, the economy experienced prolonged stagnation. The federal state tried to maintain welfare policies as proof of its 'socialist' character and borrowed heavily in the international financial markets. Once this source dried up, the state resorted to printing money and loosening credit: a classical scissors effect resulted in an hyper-inflation.

Fiscal and monetary policies were supposed to be run by the federal government. Lacking formal or informal agreement among the republics, the government was effectively disintegrating and could not pursue policies with any vigour. In the Yugoslav context, even republics who were properly managed — and the record shows that none of them was — they were bound to be dragged down by others as the dinar lost its value and money was syphoned off in an array of corrupt or ineffective investments. In this climate each republic could point at the others as the source of the problem, conveniently neglecting its own contributions. Although all the republics agreed on the need for reforms, the (con)federate structure ensured that debates over the nature of these reforms was channelled on republican and nationalist lines. Since power was located at republican level, opposition forces, from left wing communists to right wing fascists focused their attention on reforming their 'own' republic. As the pace of reform varied from one republic to another, the very concept of Yugoslavia as a united entity emerged as an issue of contention. Furthermore, as the federal government maintained a semblance of government (debating policies, collecting the federal tax and custom revenues) it became a convenient focal point for popular ill feelings.

Although coming relatively late to the scene of reform, the Slovenian communist party gave indications about five years ago that it was seriously committed to change and it became the leading democratic force in Yugoslavia. For a period the Slovenian drive towards democracy and capitalism led it on a collision course with the other republics and in particular with the hardliner Serbian communist turned nationalist leader Slobodan Miloseviç. However, trends in Yugoslavia and the world were turning in Slovenia's favour, and by 1989 the federal government under the premiership of the Croatian Ante Markoviç was itself championing the cause of reform.

Markoviç is a brilliant tactician who might prove to be a failed strategist.[8] While the newly elected government officials of Eastern Europe were queuing in Bonn with their hands open, Markoviç visited Washington and obtained a solemn promise from President Bush of American aid to the tune of one billion dollars. This money was supposed to put the Yugoslavian banking system on a sound footing.

The reform of the banking system under the auspices of the United States is extremely interesting. Of all plans for reforming the communist

systems, the reorganization of the banking system is potentially the most promising avenue.

Communist regimes have acquired in Western literature the designation: 'planned economies'. These economies may indeed be planned in *intent* but certainly not in *content*. The reality of communist economies is perhaps better described as 'low intensity chaos'. Like the infamous railway mobilization that contributed to the start of the First World War, five year plans worked provided *everyone* reached their targets simultaneously. Since delays and holdups were bound to happen, the system was inevitably in a state of perpetual breakdown: plans and directives were formulated on the basis of partial information, targets were fulfilled in proxy and quality was poor.

The nature of 'planned economy' was such that leading politburo and party members were serving as vital 'oilers' of the system, interjecting human intelligence to ease the pressure induced by a faulty system. Political leaders had to use their political power and contacts to establish what was in effect a secondary flow of credit, raw materials, spare parts and manufactured goods. This secondary system not only exacerbated the divergence between the real situation and the 'planned economy', but it was totally arbitrary and unaccounted for. As revolutionary fervour subsided, the secondary 'personalized' system proved to be an open invitation for corruption. In this period of 'post-totalitarianism', the system indeed became thoroughly corrupt. Politburo members gained and lost power over their ability to master credit and channel it to industries and services which became virtual fiefs of these leading politicians. An alliance of three different factions, the upper echelons of industry, the banking system and the communist party (arguably a fourth faction, consisting of smugglers and black marketeers, was the essential component that welded together this ruling class) emerged.

Each of these factions maintained its position through distinct measures: members of the upper echelon of the communist party could carry on corrupt practices because there was no political mechanism to replace them; directors of industry and services were able to cream off profits because they were responsible to corrupt politicians; banks were providing credit to unviable industries because they were in effect members of a fief. Conversely, this division defined the means by which communist systems were struck down: open democratic elections were the means of severing the direct link between the party and the economy; privatizing state industries were tools in restoring managerial accountability. A sound financial system, however, could short-circuit the whole process, for proper banks would starve out 'bad' firms and provide support for good ones and ultimately remove the basis of the politicians' power.

As prime minister of a (con)federal state with severe limitations imposed on his authority, Markoviç's plan was therefore to cut the Gordian knot at its most vulnerable point, the banking system, in the hope that the local republican 'Maflas' would wither. The problem was that if allowed to succeed, Markoviç's plan could have resulted in a centralized federal state.

Naturally, the republics, that is, the local 'Maflas', had no intention of giving up power without a fight. They resisted Markoviç's centralizing tendencies by beating up the nationalist drums. In so doing they have linked with the same reformers who were, in fact, already in charge of federal government policies. Thus paradoxically, but wholly logically in the Yugoslav context, central and local governments are diverging as they are apparently aiming to achieve precisely the same goals. This may explain why Prime Minister Markoviç enjoyed an extremely high approval rate (averaging seventy to eighty per cent) in *particular in Slovenia and Croatia*, at a time when nationalist and anti-federal governments were being put in place.

If the Slovenian government was serious about introducing democracy to Yugoslavia, it should have backed Markoviç's reforms. Slovenia emerged, however, as one of the strongest opposition forces to his plan.

Soon after the 1990 election, the Demos government announced its intention of renegotiating Slovenia's position in the Yugoslav state. Three options were floated: confederation, secession and parcelling (i.e. peaceful agreement among the republics on the discontinuation of the Yugoslav state — an option that would establish the republics as the legal inheritors of Yugoslavia in international law). Demos indicated that it was in favour of a new confederate structure. It warned, however, that if other republics did not pursue democratic reforms, i.e. in the event of Serbian intransigence, Slovenia would have no option but to secede unilaterally. On December 24th 1990 a plebiscite took place in Slovenia on the issue of secession. A hefty eighty-five per cent of the population voted in the affirmative. By mid April, after intense consultation with Vienna, Slovenia formally announced to the members of the Yugoslav presidency its intention to secede on the 22nd of June 1991.

There is no doubt that the vast majority of the Slovenian people favour the creation of an independent Slovenian state. It is doubtful, however, whether they understand the magnitude of the difficulties facing them. Their government certainly prefers to leave them in the dark. Secession is a risky business: Slovenia is highly integrated into the Yugoslav economy from which it draws most of its raw materials and *food*, and which has been a protected market for its inferior (compared with world standard) manufactured goods. Thus in addition to the 'normal' structural difficulties associated with the transition from communism to capitalism, which can lead to an unemployment level ranging between 30 to 50 per cent of the working population (the latter is the current estimate for Eastern Germany), Slovenia is bound to experience special difficulties as it is cut off from its traditional Yugoslavian markets and raw material inputs.

In these circumstances, foreign aid, financial and commercial is vital. But international help is not forthcoming. On the contrary, the Slovenian plebiscite and its subsequent announcement of its intended departure from Yugoslavia were greeted by the EC countries and the United States with trepidation. Jacques Delors, who happened to be visiting the White House

on the day of Slovenia's formal announcement, issued a communique with President Bush condemning Slovenian intentions. The same week the Italian foreign minister, De Michelis, visiting Belgrade with Luxembourg's and the Netherland's foreign ministers, declared that independent Slovenia will not be recognized by any of the EC countries for the 'next fifty years'.[9] By mid April all EC foreign ministers ceased direct dealings with any of the Yugoslavian republics and communicated their ideas only to the federal government.

The EC and the United States are, of course, not disinterested parties: as we have seen, the Slovenian declaration was a slap in the face to the United States' own plans for Yugoslavia; France has been nurturing a special relationship with Serbia and tends to take the Serbian side of the dispute; and Italy's De Michelis has his own plans for inter-regional trading agreements combining Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Italy. Nonetheless, the EC and the USA share three overriding concerns: to begin with, they prefer to see a (potentially) healthy Yugoslavia surviving as a junior trading partner. Secondly, and more importantly, the EC and the United States oppose the process of balkanization which could result in some twenty impoverished small states throughout eastern Europe. But above all, Slovenian secession may precipitate a bloody civil war between Serbia and Croatia. Serbia has territorial claims over Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and more significantly, a portion of Croatia; whereas Croatia has its own 'historical' claims to Bosnia-Herzegovina and parts of Serbia. These two nations are rearing to fight and their conflict could deteriorate into an extremely ferocious war. As long as Yugoslavia maintains its integrity, this war *may* be averted, but Slovenian secession opens the gate for the flood of irrational demands that have been swelling for a long time.

Whereas the EC and the USA favour Yugoslav integrity, they have stated again and again that their chief concern is that Yugoslavia solve its problems by peaceful means. There is no doubt that the majority of the Slovenian people seek integration with their European neighbours and would not wish to alienate them. With such worldwide opposition to their demands, Slovenia would have had to negotiate its way out of Yugoslavia. However, at this critical moment, just as hopes for Slovenian secession were fading away, Austria has stepped in offering recognition and financial support and making sure by its actions that Slovenian secession will take place.

As already mentioned, Slovenia declared its intended secession following three days of intense consultations with Vienna. This is, however, not the place to analyze Austrian aims and goals in supporting both the Slovenian and Croatian secessions. Austria's support has certainly little to do with its professed sympathy for the national aspirations of the Slovenian people. On the contrary, it is part of a larger plan to establish a trading community on the lines of the old Austro-Hungary empire (which included Austria, Czecho-slovakia, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia) with Vienna as its financial and commercial centre.

On the 27th of June, Austria called for a special meeting of the CSFE, posing as the honest broker between the warring parties. However, Austria's activities were noted with disapproval by both Washington and Brussels, and if journalistic reports are to be believed, they have told Vienna to stop interfering in Yugoslav affairs.

During the fighting following the declaration of independence, the Austrian army moved some units close to the Slovenian border. The Yugoslav army made particularly strenuous efforts to seal off the Austro-Slovenian border crossings. Nonetheless, the indications are that Austria is now retreating from the scene. The damage, however, was done.

In contrast to Austria's policies, the EC and the USA were consistent in their attempt to bring peace to the region. During the fateful first half of 1991, both the EC and the USA tried to pressure the Yugoslav parties into negotiation by threatening to withhold recognition from Slovenia and Croatia. The strategy obviously did not work because secession has taken place. Furthermore, their stance seem to have been interpreted by Serbia and the army as license to maintain Yugoslav integration by force. With the outbreak of fighting the EC's first mission was to bring the warring parties back to the negotiating table.

Thus we can see that the EC and the USA hold the key to the future of Yugoslavia because all the Yugoslav republics see their future as members of the Western community. Indeed, following a series of foiled attempts at bringing about a successful cease fire, the EC delegation of ministers concluded that the useless skirmishes were being carried out in order to get the EC involved. The final, rather shaky, cease fire and moratorium on Slovenia's and Croatia's secession negotiated in Brioni were achieved only under threat of withdrawal by the EC ministers.

The EC and the USA are seeking now new initiatives. But since there is no *real* issue of contention, only enmity and bitterness, it is difficult to see what new ideas they can come up with.

I called this article 'misguided nationalism'. Slovenia never experienced democracy and public opinion is therefore not well versed in the subtleties of politics. Any casual visitor to the republic can tell that Slovenians are not particularly nationalistic but are hopeful that the secession will lead to the creation of a modern well-run state. The facts on the ground point, however, otherwise.

Since coming to power, the Demos government has made little efforts towards reform. On the contrary, chaos reigns: the banking system is a model of arbitrariness: expropriating foreign currencies (individual's and companies' alike), failing to honour deposit accounts, changing rules day by day, and generally frightening off potential customers. The tax system is complex and stifles initiative. The chaos induced by the banking system forces firms with foreign dealings to maintain their foreign currency abroad for fear of expropriation. As the internal market collapses in mutual recrimination, and foreign earnings fail to return home, workers are receiving salaries only sporadically.

Yugoslavia as a whole has already gone through a prolonged period of

economic stagnation which turned into deep recession in the past two years. The Gross National Product is calculated to have fallen by 14% during 1990, and estimated to fall in 1991 by an additional 15% (this estimate was done before the present crisis and appears now very optimistic indeed). It appears now that the Slovenian economy will carry on its downward momentum and many economists predict total collapse by October or November.

The strategy carried out by the Slovenian government since the declaration of independence was not particularly subtle: it tried to provoke (and is still trying) the federal army so that it can present itself as a small democracy struggling with the dark forces of Stalinism. Unfortunately, the generals were happy to oblige, issuing a series of declarations threatening everyone in sight: Slovenia, Croatia, the federal government, Austria, Germany and the 'forces of imperialism'. The federal army remains basically out of political control and must be considered as one of the more dangerous elements in Yugoslavia.

During the crisis, a militant group of Slovenian ministers headed by the defence minister, Janes Jansha, the Interior Minister Bavçar, and the information minister, Kacin (all three with strong communist backgrounds) went on a propaganda campaign to convince the world that a massacre is about to take place in Slovenia. On the second day of the fighting they announced that the Yugoslav army is preparing for a chemical attack; later on they declared that Serbia is mobilizing its reserves to fight Slovenia; and just as a number of Slovenian officials were meeting with the EC ministers and Yugoslavian officials on the beautiful island of Brioni, the trio went on Slovene TV to announce the 'uncovering' of a new army plot to conquer Slovenia.

The dreary business of Yugoslav disintegration has only begun. If the three months moratorium imposed by the EC holds, then it is more than likely that a second round of confrontation will ensue as soon as it runs out. For given the present disposition and quality of the various political actors in the drama, it is most unlikely that any advance will be made during the summer. Meanwhile, the tension between Croatians and Serbians, Serbians and Albanians is at breaking point and could explode at any moment.

NOTES

1. This article is based on countless discussions and interviews with Slovenian friends, academics and government officials. Since several of them asked to remain anonymous, I thought it right and proper that none is mentioned by name.
2. The Yugoslavian political structure is undergoing transition and is therefore very confusing. Under the 1974 constitutional reform power is located at the level of the republics, each of which has a president, prime minister, government and a parliament. The federal executive consists of the presidency and the government. The presidency holds (in theory) the supreme authority; it contains one delegate from each of the republics. Every year a different delegate assumes the title of president. The federal government currently under the premiership of a Croatian, Ante Markovi, is answerable to the presidency. Nonetheless, the presidency has been effectively paralysed for the past two years and, as a consequence, a non-elected federal government increased in importance. Other federal agencies include the two houses of the federal parliament which sit in Belgrade. One house

is elected directly by every Yugoslavian citizen. The other consists of delegates from the republican parliaments.

3. Save the federal army which is still dominated by old-time communist generals. But the army's attempt to capture the Slovenian border crossings may have proved that it lacked real political power.
4. I would not like to suggest that the Slovenian leadership bears all or even most of the responsibility. The Slovenian leadership turned out to be no worse, but no better, than the leadership of any of the other republics.
5. Kosovo is an autonomous province located in the republic of Serbia. Ninety per cent of Kosovo's population are Moslem Albanian and ten per cent are Serbians. The Albanian majority is calling for a status of independent republic to Kosovo. Serbia has resisted these calls and has revoked, to all intent and purposes, Kosovo's autonomy. Serbia's treatment of the Kosovo created fear among other republics of Serbian aggressive nationalism.
6. The six republics are: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. (Serbia has two autonomous regions: Kosovo and Vojvodina.) The present nationalist tension was created when Serbia in practice revoked the autonomy of these regions.
7. Kardelej, a Slovenian, was the righthand man of Tito.
8. I am indebted to Professor Turk for enlightening me on the aims and tactics of the Markovic plan.
9. *Politika: The International Weekly*, No. 56, 1991.

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The October number of *Contemporary Review* includes: *Has The Poll Tax Killed British Local Government?* by Howard Davies, *Hungary: An Aspirant State* by Michael Nash, *Hong Kong Paying the Price for Britain's Mistakes* by Paul Mackintosh.

TRANSATLANTIC EAVESDROPPING: MINNESOTA BY AIR

by Tim Gebbels

BBC Radio Three's programme schedule for the first weekend of June had, in radio terms, an intriguingly ecumenical look to it. The whole network appeared to be decamping four thousand miles to the American Mid-West for a thirty hour joint broadcast with Minnesota Public Radio. It is well known in broadcasting circles that while TV viewers are highly promiscuous, ready at a moment to channel hop, regular listeners to radio have a much greater degree of station loyalty. I would not like to think of myself as xenophobic but I have to confess that it was with the mildest trepidation I tuned in to Radio Three's weekend away on the prairies.

Any initial apprehension on my part as to what to expect however was soon proved to be unfounded. British listeners were comprehensively introduced to the forthcoming schedule by a twenty-five minute preview at the start of proceedings on the Saturday lunchtime. Continuity over the thirty hours was handled by John Drummond and John Tusa, (controller of Radio Three and managing-director of the BBC's World Service respectively). Listening to their well paced two handed introduction I was strongly reminded of a basic but easily forgotten fact. One is so used to regarding men such as these as higher corporation administrators that it is easy to forget that quite apart from anything else they are both very able broadcasters.

Brian Barfield, Radio Three's head of planning and the man charged with organising the weekend, was proud of the team spirit among BBC personnel at the time. He says of their American hosts who generally take a more hierarchical view: 'They were very surprised to see the managing-director of the World Service and the controller of Radio Three with their sleeves rolled up writing scripts and cutting tape. The only way you can get an operation like this to work at all is of course by team effort'.

Of the operation itself the *Radio Times* promised much. As it was a Radio Three enterprise there naturally looked to be a strong and varied musical element. The weekend's listening was put together in and broadcast from MPR's studios in the twin cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul and symphony and chamber orchestras from both were much in evidence performing the works of Tchaikovsky, Debussy, Scarlatti, Rachmaninov, Mendelssohn and Schubert. Contemporary and local talent was not ignored either. On Saturday evening there was a performance of Dominick Argento's opera 'The Aspern Papers' with an interview with the composer during the intermission. In the early hours of Sunday morning, (broadcasts went on until 4.00 am UK time), a programme called 'The Minneapolis Sound' investigated the rise to world renown of local rock hero, Prince. This was followed immediately by a two hour jazz experience further

extending the musical variety of the weekend.

Quite apart from the range of musical offerings there was a good deal of interesting and informative speech based material, a prime example of which was a series of programmes called snapshots. Each highlighted some aspect of life in the Twin Cities or the state of Minnesota as a whole. Brendan Gill, formerly of *The New Yorker*, told of the architectural significance of Minneapolis's Summit Avenue. Bill Holm and Paul Gruchow discussed the encroachment of human habitation on Minnesota's prairies. Alistair Cooke, so well known to listeners on both sides of the Atlantic, outlined the history and current world reputation of Rochester's Mayo Clinic while Jonathan Raban spoke of America's immigrant experience. Food was not neglected. There was a light-hearted item showing how a local company invented America's most legendary cook 'Betty Crocker'. In addition, there were longer more in-depth features. A visit to the Walker Arts Centre interviewed participants and organisers of the weekend's open air performance in the sculpture garden. There was a consideration of politics in the Mid-West, a discussion of arts funding in the US and an investigation of the importance of baseball in the American psyche.

What gave the weekend atmosphere for me — just as much as any one programme — were Drummond and Tusa's asides during continuity links. I did not realize for example that, although the Twin Cities span the Mississippi, they are only three hundred miles from the Canadian border. Many public buildings in Minneapolis-St. Paul are joined by 'sky ways' or enclosed corridors suspended above street level — handy in bad weather. The lone figures that can be seen lurking in the entrances to shopping malls and underground car parks turn out on closer inspection to be not criminals or lunatics but smokers.

Three programmes in particular caught my attention. 'Making Molehills out of Mountains' on Sunday afternoon investigated a specialized area of the computer industry based in Minnesota. Seymour Cray, little known to most people, is legendary in computing circles as the architect of so-called super-computers — machines which vastly outrun in terms of speed and therefore power their nearest mainframe rivals. They are made in Minnesota and Geoff Watts examined their enormous contribution to scientific research. The speed of a computer is typically measured by the number of calculations it can perform in a second. For one of Cray's machines this figure is approximately two and a half thousand million. Commonly their application is the simulation of experiments either impossibly difficult, or just impossible, to carry out in the physical world. Meteorology is an obvious example, where a computer model of the earth's atmosphere facilitates weather forecasting. Alternatively, an aircraft designer wishing to examine the aerodynamic properties of a new specification may well elect to use a computer model rather than go to the expense of building dummy aircraft and procuring a wind tunnel.

The second programme to catch my eye particularly was also compiled by Geoff Watts. For any practitioner working in the behavioural sciences,

the very name Minnesota is virtually part of the trade jargon. There is the Minnesota multi-phasic personality inventory which, with salutary ease, enables the medical researcher to reduce an individual's personality to a brief description readily storable on computer. The Minnesota Model is an interdisciplinary structured approach to patients suffering from alcoholism or other forms of chemical dependency. It brings every year thousands of sufferers to the state's myriad clinics. In surgery the University of Minnesota is perhaps the leading centre for the lesser celebrated transplant operations of the pancreas, the malfunctioning of which is a chief cause of diabetes. In 'The Method and the Madness' Watts started his examination of medicine and medical funding with this Minnesota Model. It was in a subsequent interview with one of the two original creators of the Minnesota Model that Watts approached the question of health care funding in the US. By and large medicine is paid for by private insurance but nearly 190 million Americans have less than adequate health cover. The paradox is that as a proportion of GNP, twelve per cent (double the amount spent on the NHS in Britain) goes on health care. In acknowledging this irony Dr. David Sutherland of the University of Minnesota says: 'We could have a very healthy population by abolishing medicine altogether. You really don't improve the health of a nation by having sophisticated health care. It is the compassionate thing to do'. So it is and for this reason any purely economic objection to medical care in a developed nation is practically meaningless. Minnesota's response to the problem of under insurance has been to set up a Health Care Access Commission which placed its recommendations before the state legislature in January. It advocates a state organised insurance scheme designed to leave no one without some form of financial protection against the cost of illness. At the time this programme went out the resulting bill was awaiting the signature of the state governor.

At one point during Radio Three's Twin Cities weekend John Drummond commented that a prime motive behind the transmissions was curiosity, the aim being to see how other people broadcast and how other people lived. For me, 'Making Molehills Out of Mountains' and 'The Method and the Madness' were two features which undoubtedly achieved those ends. I had heard of super-computers before but had no idea of their strong connection with Minnesota or the pioneering work of Seymour Cray. With the financing of national health care so topical and indeed controversial an issue in Britain, Radio Three's consideration of medical funding in the States provided a fascinating comparison while sounding a warning note for any in the UK prone to self-righteousness over the government's attitude towards the National Health Service.

Garrison Keillor, like Alistair Cooke, is a broadcaster with devoted followings both here and in America. His well crafted ironic humour contrasts refreshingly with the crude talentless 'comedy' so prevalent on television and radio. His two hour live variety show on the Saturday evening of Radio Three's Twin Cities weekend was a definite must and in the event I was certainly not disappointed. Keillor is known to British

audiences through transmissions of his 'Lake Wobegone Days' and 'Now We are Married' on the BBC in the 1980s. He also had his own one man show in London's West-End. American listeners first heard him in 1974 when he began his broadcasting career on Minnesotan Public Radio. 'A Prairie Home Companion' proved so popular that in 1980 it was broadcast nationally. The format has not needed to change much over the years from Keillor's original idea of a live variety show. From his American Radio Company we heard an entertaining mix of music, song, sketches and gentle satirical monologues from Keillor himself, acting as links between different segments of the show. Its sound was akin to that of radio variety of the sort made by the BBC in the 1940s and 50s. Both have a distinctly cerebral feel when compared with their more modern counterparts.

Apparently it was remarked by a BBC staff man at a meeting following their Minnesotan weekend, that the output had been characteristic not just of Radio Three, but of Radios One, Two, Three, Four and Five. It is a justified piece of self-congratulation, for around the backbone of serious music there was something there for every radio listener in this country. It is to be hoped that Twin Citians together with audiences elsewhere in America (who were able to hear the BBC's presentation) also found something to interest and entertain them. MPR lost nothing by the venture certainly. While they provided facilities and personnel free for the BBC, the fact that Radio Three had chosen Minneapolis-St. Paul was felt by MPR to be a feather in their cap, due to be passed round at the end of June in the annual fund raising drive. Why did the BBC choose the Twin Cities, for although in the event it proved an excellent choice, it surely was not the most obvious place to go for at the outset? Brian Barfield, the weekend's planner, told me: 'We thought of America. We wanted to avoid the obvious — Los Angeles, Boston, New York and some one suggested the Twin Cities, Minneapolis-St. Paul. We knew about the Minnesota Orchestra and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. We knew about the Guthrie theatre and of course there was Garrison Keillor'. Mr. Barfield was also greatly impressed by MPR's technical facilities and the standards of their engineering staff.

A mild personal disappointment was the absence of any radio drama from the weekend. Mr. Barfield acknowledged the lack but said there simply was not time to make it happen and one takes his point. The whole project does seem to have been organised in record time. The original exploratory trip to the US was made as recently as February and programme making started a bare two weeks before the broadcasts.

This was not a first for Radio Three. Last year the network travelled to Berlin for a weekend's transmissions examining the future of the city following the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Leningrad was to have been the next venue but increasingly daunting cost profiles plus a potential language barrier forced them to abandon the idea and look elsewhere.

The actual programme mix for the weekend was Brian Barfield's decision and it was one that turned out to be rather problematic: 'It was

quite late in the day that it became apparent that Minnesota Public Radio were not only going to carry the weekend but offer it to stations throughout America as well. This caused a number of editorial problems for us because we were never quite sure which audience we were addressing. We took the decision that we were addressing a British audience basically and that American stations were eavesdropping on it'. With programmes like the Saturday evening opera and 'Table Talk' and 'Choral Evensong' on Sunday, the intention was in the end to shadow Radio Three's normal weekend schedule as much as possible. Interestingly enough production costs were actually lower for the thirty hours than they would have been for a regular Saturday and Sunday at home. The comparison is not a very real one though because facilities and staff were freely given by MPR. If the costs of travel, accommodation and most significantly the satellite link are added in, the weekend works out at getting on for sixty thousand pounds more expensive than usual.

'It has generated a large post bag and the majority of those letters are in support of the weekend and asking us to do similar things in the future'. This listener most emphatically seconds that. Brian Barfield however was not keen to commit himself. I gather Australia is a preliminary possibility among others and personally I cannot wait. Radio Three's Twin Cities weekend was a veritable feast but I, like many others, I suspect, am rapidly growing hungrier for much, much more.

BANKS TO CONTROL MEDITERRANEAN POLLUTION

by Thomas Land

THE World Bank and the European Investment Bank are expected shortly to underwrite the lion's part of a $200m investment needed for adequate contingency plans and facilities capable of dealing with oil and chemical spills around the Mediterranean basin.

The two financial institutions wielding enormous influence over industrial development throughout the region recently launched an ambitious joint plan for the protection of the Mediterranean and its coastal areas from further environmental degradation. Experts put the potential investment finance likely to be generated by the banks' initiative at $6bn over the next five years.

Their plan has now reached its crucial second phase including the floating of an impressive regional technical assistance programme.

The proposed contingency arrangements to be centred around the existing Regional Oil Combatting Centre in Malta may well emerge as the most urgent and ambitious component of the programme.

The priorities for the second and third phases of the programme include both curative and preventative measures and follow a balanced approach to environmental action programming. These priorities reflect the views of the 18 Mediterranean countries. The plans include the creation of essential infrastructure for effective regional management policies dealing with hazardous wastes, fresh water resources and coastal zones as well as arrangements for accidents which can cause thousands of gallons of oil to pour into the sea.

During the past decade, the two banks have directed more than $5.6bn to projects aimed at the protection of the Mediterranean. Their joint programme will involve policy and project implementation as well as attracting and co-ordinating funds from other sources, including the United Nations' development agencies and the European Community.

The banks project a grim view of the future of the Mediterranean. Pollution and over-fishing have reduced the fisheries resources of the sea by up to 80 per cent in some regions. A quarter of the 150 Italian, Greek and French beaches analysed recently were found to be polluted above danger levels.

The annual traffic in the Mediterranean of ships of more than 100 gross registered tons is estimated at 22,000 vessels. About 2,000 merchant ships are in the Mediterranean at any one time and up to 300 of them are oil tankers.

Despite the high tanker traffic and the increased risk resulting from the aging of the global tanker fleet, the Mediterranean has been so far spared a massive oil spill. Nevertheless, there is a high level of pollution, most of it caused by the deliberate discharge of bilge and ballast waters from tankers.

A specialist spokesman for the two banks has expressed fear that 'illicit disposal of hazardous wastes generated outside the Mediterranean may already be occurring'.

'Moreover', he goes on, 'increased sea transport of industrial chemicals means a growing danger of accidental spills of large quantities of toxic materials. The resulting potential risks are significant partly because of the damage that these products and the associated pollution can cause to human health and the natural ecosystems and partly because proper control mechanisms are lacking in the region.'

The two banks consider prevention and control of marine pollution from oil as well as chemical spills essential for avoiding possible irreversible damage to coastal areas and ecosystems. Their programme includes the following components:

Operational oil spill contingency plans for all Mediterranean countries; such plans will include the development of subregional and intercountry arrangements to maximize efficiency and control and to co-ordinate actions against spills of hazardous materials.

A marine construction project for the expansion and rehabilitation of port oil reception facilities, including floating facilities.

Vigorous monitoring and enforcement of the Maritime Pollution Convention and the Barcelona Convention which provide for cutting discharges from ships as well as land based sources.

Preparation of complementary plans to deal with potential disasters such as shipping accidents involving hazardous materials.

Specialist training and the provision of adequate equipment essential for emergency preparedness.

Immediate response is crucial for containing an oil spill,' explains an important study issued by the two banks, 'and contingency planning facilitates early response . . . It would take an estimated $200m to establish adequate and workable contingency plans for oil spills in all Mediterranean countries. Priority must also be given to including hazardous materials spills in contingency plans.'

The study — *The Environment Programme for the Mediterranean: Preserving a Shared Heritage and Managing a Common Resource*, (The World Bank and the European Investment Bank, Luxembourg and Washington) — will be read very closely by decision makers in agriculture and fisheries as well as the shipping, chemicals, marine construction, insurance, tourism and energy industries and the relevant government departments in the region.

These are the other priority projects outlined in the study:

Wastes: The banks are to provide investment for the safe collection, disposal or recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, the identification of disposal sites, the investigation of potential high-risk sites, the implementation of clean-up programmes and the establishment of proper disposal facilities.

The programme will embrace the strengthening of monitoring and enforcement capabilities and the development of incentives to encourage

low-waste technologies, byproduct recovery and recycling.

Water: For public health reasons, special attention will be paid in the programme to urban, industrial and agricultural waste water management issues raised in the protection of the region's precious and threatened surface and groundwater resources.

Watershed management programmes on the agenda comprise an integrated list of regional projects such as soil conservation, afforestation, improved fertilizer and pesticide use and industrial planning including the siting of manufacturing plants and solid waste disposal facilities.

Coastal zones: Several Mediterranean countries and the two banks already sponsor many important programmes to contain the degradation of the coastal areas, the site of unique natural and historical assets. New projects planned in the present initiative include the establishment of financing mechanisms to support the orderly development of the coastal zones, the protection of the remaining ecologically sensitive areas such as wetlands, seagrass beds and the habitats of migratory species and the conservation of cultural heritages through sound management practices.

Fresh investment will strengthen the capabilities of regional and local agencies to implement and monitor coastal zone planning leading to an improvement in the urban environment.

Phase one of the banks' programme involved the identification and diagnosis of the causes, nature and extent of environmental degradation in the Mediterranean. This has enabled them to define priority areas for intervention and effective instruments with which to mount a responsive assistance programme. The wide ranging studies conducted during that phase included technical issues as well as economic and financial matters.

The current second phase is to identify and prepare investment projects and define specific policy measures. The proposed environmental technical assistance programme will be the centrepiece of this phase. Phase three will comprise the implementation of a broad array of investment projects and regional and country-specific policy measures.

The four principal sources of marine pollution in the region are industrial and municipal waste water, agricultural run off, oil and chemical spills from ships and improper disposal of solid wastes. The resulting environmental degradation, often leading to irreversible consequences, is expected to worsen. The programme mounted by the two banks is therefore likely merely to moderate an accelerating global trend.

One important contribution of the programme will be the provision of financial and technical assistance to poor Mediterranean countries to strengthen their national institutions responsible for planning, managing and regulating the environmet.

The two banks have been increasingly concerned with environmental degradation in the region, but their lending policies have hitherto contributed to significant improvements only in selected, isolated areas. Their joint programme provides an opportunity for a comprehensive, systematic analysis and development strategy by exchanges of experience throughout the region.

Since 1980, the World Bank has invested over $2.3bn in environment protection, 8 per cent of its total lending in the region, largely in the southern and eastern rim of the Mediterranean. Its agricultural lending policy has been also focused on environmental improvement, as in forestry projects in Morocco, Turkey and Yugoslavia, drainage and land reclamation in Egypt and Syria, range management in Turkey and North Africa.

In addition, the bank has made loans containing provisions for the restoration or conservation of archaelogical or historical sites in Egypt, Turkey and Yugoslavia. Several of its development programmes in urban areas are concerned with improvements of environmental quality.

The European Investment Bank has raised some $3.3bn over the past decade for loan financing covering a range of environmental investment including clean water supply, waste water catchment and treatment, disposal of solid wastes, reduction of air pollution, re-afforestation, urban environmental improvement and the protection of architectural and historical heritage.

Its programmes in the Mediterranean include ongoing work on waste water treatment plants for entire river basins such as the Po in Italy and the Segura in Spain as well as sewage treatment stations for cities such as Algiers, Athens, Marseilles and Nicosia, oil refinery depollution projects in Greece and Italy and heritage conservation in Venice and Pompeii.

[Thomas Land is an author and foreign correspondent who writes on global affairs.]

ART IN HOSPITALS

by J. H. Baron and M. F. R. Miles

HOGARTH painted Christ at the Pool of Bethesda for St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, in 1735. It can still be seen in its original position, on the stairs to the Great Hall and Consultants' dining room. In the newly extended children's department, work by several young British artists forms part of the interior design. The period of more than two and a half centuries between these paintings has seen a continuing but uneven history of placing art in hospitals for the benefit of patients and staff. This history seems independent of political change and economic crisis. There have been times of visual austerity in hospital architecture — none more than the 1960s and '70s — and wide variation in the quality of art bought or specially commissioned, but the use of art and craft work in hospitals now constitutes a major if largely unwritten history. It has not been sustained through sentimental ideas that 'art is good for you', but because art can be functional as well as aesthetic, without compromise. The nature of that function has varied with historical context, from spiritual aid to navigational aid, but it is the utility of art which justifies expenditure on it within the National Health Service.

Cost and Value

People sometimes write to a newspaper complaining of the cost, in relation to kidney machines, of hospital art projects. The comment deserves an answer, beyond simply pointing out that money for art normally comes from non-clinical budgets and is not in competition with care, but may assist its delivery.

The existing budget for the NHS estate and its maintenance is substantial, and separate from clinical expenditure. This money can be deployed imaginatively or not. There is no additional cost in buying paint which is not magnolia. Sometimes, a marginal additional cost provides a more than marginal benefit, and such extra money is usually found from Trust funds, grants from Regional Arts Boards, or donations from local industries. There may even be opportunities to generate small income from sales of postcards of art or commission on sales of pictures, say by the local art society, exhibited within a hospital.

Art is often good value for money and artists tend not to command the high fees of designers or architects. They do deserve professional rates for skilful work, and are often able to use social as well as tactile skills whilst at work in a hospital. But good value for money is not the same as cost benefit. How does art become cost effective?

The first condition for cost-effectiveness is that art answers needs which are identified as part of health care. In a long stay hospital, this means relating artistic activities to the individual care plans of residents, and giving staff a wider variety of means with which to address those needs. Care plans usually include the need to enable a sense of self worth in residents, and to retain or enhance communication, mobility and ability

to initiate choices. Working with a professional artist will involve a resident in making a series of choices (colour, shape, texture), and manipulation of materials to communicate feelings. The completed work usually gives a sense of achievement, adding to self esteem. In these ways, art is a highly effective means of caring, and a significant element in the quality of life in an institution. This applies to all art forms, including visual arts, music, dance and story telling.

In an acute hospital — the District General — one of the main problems tends to be that many patients and visitors are lost, and conventional signs are useless. Art can act as a landmark to help people navigate, saving the time of staff spent giving directions in corridors. In waiting areas, a set of attractive prints or photographs, which may echo the locality and its history, take up the attention of patients, who will otherwise dwell in their fear of illness, pain and death. In entrances and foyers, art and craft can be part of a well designed interior which welcomes patients and gives a feeling that they are safe in the hands of a well run organisation. Clutter and drabness, on the other hand, will only cause undue anxiety.

If patients feel more welcome, safe and hence relaxed, they will be less defensive, more tolerant of waiting times, and communicate with staff more articulately. This will save time as well as stress. Art, like improvements to the quality of service, contributes to an efficiently and humanely run institution. There will be additional and direct cost benefits if it assists in staff recruitment and retention. Industry has put resources into well designed workplaces because it means staff feel more valued, work better and stay with a company longer. Their positive feelings about their workplace and employer are passed on to customers. Exactly the same is true in a hospital. The alternative is a dreary environment in which staff feel exploited, pass on their lack of satisfaction to patients, and leave as soon as they are able.

There is some, if scant, evidence that environmental factors increase recovery rates. Patients studied in a suburban hospital in Pennsylvania were found to recover from one type of surgery quicker and to need lower drug doses when they had a view of landscape rather than brick walls. This is suggested by common sense (and the cost of keeping a patient in hospital for even one day will buy many trees), but more evidence is needed to demonstrate this, the most direct cost benefit.

A Long Tradition

When art and landscape are seen as legitimate elements within the health estates budget, a new chapter will be added to a long, if neglected, history, entwined with that of art at the highest level. When Brunelleschi designed the Hospital of the Innocents in Florence (1419-26), he intended it to contain the work of the finest artists; Della Robbia's medallions (1487) complete Brunelleschi's colonnade, and children still play in the courtyard gardens. It is an image of a 'Hospital' (actually an orphanage) quite different from its modern counterparts.

Through the Victorian period, art and craft continued to be prominent in the design of Hospitals. Some Poor Law hospitals have been restored,

notably St. Charles in West London, as beautiful buildings. There is a major tradition of tile murals such as those at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle and St. Thomas' Hospital, London. This tradition is renewed in a commission for three large tile pictures at Cumberland Infirmary in 1991. Stained glass was used frequently, and many examples remain, some (like those at South Cleveland Hospital and St. George's Hospital, London), transferred from nineteenth century buildings to their modern replacements. This tradition, too, continues, in the stained glass for the chapel of St. Nicholas Hospital, Newcastle, and Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead. Contemporary commissions for art and craft works are helping transform the NHS within a new vision of quality care.

The bleak corridor, by contrast, seemingly endless, filled with discarded trolleys, festooned with old and badly written notices and brown signs, and home to a few plastic chairs on which the patients sit and wait, hoping someone still knows they are there, remains a popular image of the NHS. The view for anyone wheeled along these tunnels of despondency on a trolley is an alternation of blinding fluorescent tubes and dark intervals. It seems the institution has taken on a terrifying sense of design by default. Arts projects inevitably raise issues of design and can be a catalyst to a radical upgrading of whole areas. This is logical. People go to a hospital because they desire to feel better. People work there to help patients feel better. If the environment makes them feel worse, it should not be acceptable.

The problem can be traced to ethical roots and material causes. The latter are straightforward — budget constraints through the 1960s and '70s required hospitals to be built at minimal cost. The policy now tends to favour 'long term value for money', a quite different concept which allows architects to remember why, in a wet climate, people once made pitched rooves, and in a cold one, solid materials such as brick. Yet the root of the problem is an attitude of mind, whereby budgets are not deployed for aesthetic merit even when there is no additional cost. It seems that the design of hospitals has been mediated by an institutional way of thinking which relies on sameness and dullness.

New Departures

In places where people are vulnerable and staff work under great pressure, the environment needs to be designed for a sense of health, growth and life. The best example of this to date is the new West Dorset Hospital, Dorchester, by Percy Thomas Partnership, designed with a human scale, around a set of courtyards, using vernacular style and materials. The corridors are wide, carpeted and have coloured, pitched ceilings with concealed, diffused lighting. The hospital has a collection of archive photographs and contemporary prints. A bird garden has been installed in one courtyard, with extracts of John Clare's poetry carved on a series of stones amongst the flowers and shrubs. This project won the 1990 Astra Arts Award. The most succinct description was given by a taxi driver whose daughter had recently been a patient:

'It's a lovely hospital; as soon as you get in there it

gives you a feeling of health.'

Landscape plays a key role at West Dorset. The first item, however, cut from any hospital building scheme which runs over budget tends to be landscape. When Richard Burton's spectacular, steel-clad low energy hospital for the Isle of Wight entered a cost over-run, it was not surprising that the wildlife lake, despite being a central element of the design, was dropped, fortunately to be restored by sponsorship at a later stage. Given the therapeutic benefits of landscape, especially water features, which convey a sense of washing away dis-ease, as the Pool in Hogarth's picture at St. Bartholomew's, it should not be regarded as less important than car parks and signs, to both of which large budgets are assigned.

West Dorset Hospital has a waterfall in its largest courtyard, using 20 tons of local Portland stone, and paid for by local fund raising. It gives the sight of water, the sound of its running, and a fresh smell in the air. St. Oswald's Hospice, Newcastle has a small pool for ducks in the garden, and all the rooms have a view of this. At Colchester General, visitors pass over water on entering the hospital. At Royal United Hospitals, Bath, several small areas have been planted to attract wildlife, some with fountains or pools, and all this is part of giving a feeling of health.

Art as much as landscape has utility, but it is versatile and offers responses at many levels. The day rooms of a hospital can be so depressing that patients, who are quite sane in such matters, do not wish to use them. Others are not given a choice, and sat in a row on one side of the room opposite the obligatory television at full volume on the other. Artists have been employed to work with patients and staff in longer stay wards, where the dayroom is the focal point of activity. Reminiscence is often used, which affirms the patients personal history. The question which arises is: should we escape or celebrate?

During the 1970s, much hospital art consisted of murals of 'jungle' scenes and the like. If these were skilful enough they could fall back on a quality of colour or drawing; otherwise, the illusion was brittle, and broken by the first scratch or tea-stain. Nobody thinks a British hospital contains pockets of tropical rain forest, and patients may not wish to be patronised through painted illusions.

The alternative, pioneered, for example, in a residency at Battle Hospital, Berkshire, is to work with what is there and celebrate its humanity. The artist discussed the question with patients and staff, and all agreed that since lunch was the main point in the day, this should be the subject of a large picture. Portraits of patients and staff are accurate, not romantic, but what comes across is the dedication of the staff and the simple but warm human activity of the ward — a positive monument to ordinary life.

The initiative which has done most to integrate art and craft in the hospital environment is the Department of Health's series of Demonstration Projects in Outpatient, Accident and Emergency, and Day Surgery areas. Taking a small number of typical buildings of different periods, the project has demonstrated how the environment can be re-designed. This includes new seating, lighting, flooring and colour schemes, and in each case (14

in the first two rounds through 1989 to 1991) art. The stained glass at Gateshead and tile pictures at Cumberland are two examples; a series of embroidered textile works, like kites suspended from the ceiling in Hull's new children's casualty department constitute a third. At Leeds General Infirmary, a tufted wool hanging depicts local landmarks in a medium which itself is part of the city's history, and at St. George's, South London, large format photographic images of landscape were incorporated in a colour zoning aid to navigation: to find the green zone, people follow images of trees.

The rationale of the Demonstration Projects is that people have high confidence in the quality of clinical care, resources have been put into service enhancement (such as computerised appointment systems), but the patient's first experience is seeing the hospital and its environment. To convey quality of care, that environment needs up-grading, to impart a 'sense of health' and a well-run organisation.

Health and Art

It is not accidental that the words 'health' and 'whole' share a common Anglo-Saxon root. Paul Tillich, in his essay on the Relation of Religion and Health traces this in every major Indo-European language. To be healthy is to be whole. This means the physician treats the whole person, and sees more than their symptoms of disease. It also implies buildings with a sense of grace and delight, which encourage positive feelings and contain images conducive to health.

The concept of a 'Health Service' extends to all health buildings. At Withymoor Village Surgery and Brierly Hill Health Centre, in the West Midlands, doctors have worked with artists to create sympathetic environments in primary health care buildings. Doctor-patient communication is part of medicine, and is helped by a welcoming interior; medical training may need to lend this more emphasis. At Duke University Medical School, North Carolina, drama is used as part of training, for example in dramatisation by students of William Carlos Williams' 'doctor stories', based on his own practice as a physician. Students discuss the ethical issues involved, but also have to act the stories, learning body language.

In hospitals and health centres, the arts have a major role in quality health care. It was to advise on making the best use of art, and to carry out research and development work, that in 1989 the British Health Care Arts Centre was established, with support from the Department of Health and major charities. It will initiate studies on the effectiveness and cost-benefits of art in hospitals, and seek to integrate art in new hospital buildings. More than five centuries after Brunelleschi, and two and a half since Hogarth, art remains part of health care.

[Malcolm Miles is Director of The British Health Care Arts Centre, of which Dr. J. H. Baron is chairman. The Centre is located at the College of Art in Dundee.]

SYLVIA PLATH, A BALANCE OF LOSS AND GAIN

by Patrick Wakeling

THE adversities to which Sylvia was subjected from, say, June 1962 until her death in February, 1963, were not, if measured along the scale of such things any greater than are endured by countless anonymous women. It is a common experience to live as a single parent. Indeed, judged from the outside she received more support (both personal and financial), lived under better conditions, than most women with no husband, and children to care for. Women, too, who suffer not months but years of deprivation, humiliation and crushing responsibility. Her assets, at the time she moved from Devon to London in 1962, were set down by her mother as follows: deep love of her children; supportive letters from her psychiatrist; hopes of reconciliation with her husband, 'endless' offers of help from her family. As if in response to these blessings Sylvia wrote, on December 21st, 1962:

> I have never been so happy in my life.

Approximately six weeks later she killed herself.

Plath was a puzzling mixture of the normal (of the supernormal, almost) and the morbid. Her complexity prompts explanations of equal complexity, whose effect is to distance her from the reader. This is unfortunate. Difficult as some of her poetry is, its effect is undeniably direct. Twenty-six years after her death her lines lie crouched to spring like the angry tigress she was. Much of her work is also repellent. Her preoccupation with death, loneliness, the claustration of *The Bell Jar* arouse anxieties and disturbing images. But I will steer clear of the psychoanalytic. The notions of loss and gain are simpler and well within the experience of everybody. So is suffering. Plath resented suffering. First, she denies it, then at its insistence sends acids to destroy it. When these are unsuccessful she suspends her misery in the aspic of poetry on which others feed. For her suffering was anonymity. She courted (consciously that is) no experiences likely to introduce her to hardship. Happiness was immensely important to her. Yet in all her dreams of literary fame there is no acknowledgement of suffering as grist to her mill. Though there is one. In October, 1962, she wrote to her mother:

> P.S. Forget about the court case — I'll manage that fine alone. Every experience is grist for a novelist.

But it was only a 'P.S.'.

Plath's poetry may, I suggest, be justifiably considered as a response of varying intensity to the balance of loss and gain. In addition, there is evidence that October and November had a special significance as months of composition. To begin with, loss has its own meaning in the life of Sylvia Plath, but not one unique to her: she shares it with many other women. Marjorie G. Pedloff touches on this in her *Sylvia Plath, The Woman and the Work*. She discusses the poem 'Parliament Hill Fields' in which,

> The poet mourns not for the loss of her baby as a new human being whom she might have loved and cared for, but rather for the loss of a vital part of herself, without which she becomes a sheer vacuum, an empty vessel.

Perloff goes on to quote R. D. Laing and thereby hopes to establish the poem as expressing an essentially schizophrenic experience: the fear of 'engulfment', the fear that other people threaten to annihilate the fragile self. This is loose talk because it insinuates the possibility of Sylvia being schizophrenic. There is no 'hard' evidence that she was so at any time. It is more profitable to keep away from a preoccupation with psychopathology of major proportions and to deal with experience in ordinary terms. Pregnancy creates a special intimacy between mother and child. It is a dream-time in which the mother's fantasies play freely upon a being whose reality as a person, whose limitations and whose conformity to Man's institutions have not yet been demonstrated. Childbirth ends this dream. The 'secret' is out. The child must be shared and becomes to a degree public property. In a sense, therefore, all children are lost, at birth, to their mothers. Such, at any rate is often the case, though not, one would agree, invariably. At all events, giving birth may not be the happy event expected by conventional notions, and one must remember here that Plath's idea of happiness contained all the goals of the Fifties: marriage, children, money, respectability. In some instances birth may be felt as a loss (as much so as a misscarriage), or at best a painful mixture of loss and gain. So, birth equals loss, but then so does death. Marriage is gain and yet it entails a perceived loss of stature: the threat, if you will, of engulfment. Pregnancy is gain; miscarriage undoubtedly loss. The cardinal events in Sylvia's life may, accordingly, be set down under the following headings:

Gain.
- First pregnancy, July, 1959.
- Second pregnancy, April, 1961.

Loss.
- Death of her father Otto, 5.11.40.
- Birth of Frieda, 1.4.60.
- Birth of Nicholas, 17.1.62.
- Miscarriage, 6.2.61.

Loss-Gain.
- Marriage to Ted Hughes, 16.6.56.
- Marital break-up and separation from Ted, June-October, 1962.

There are two other events which must not be overlooked: Plath's birthday, which was ten days before the date of her father's death, and her appendix operation on 28 February 1961.

The death of Otto is the primary and greatest loss, making her separation from Ted all the more disturbing. Marriage conferred, to begin with, stimulation and 'endorsement' but in the end it led, for such was her perception of it, to a loss of artistic freedom. The arrival and departure of her husband are both important to Sylvia's development as a poet. The meanings of loss and gain applied to her are often paradoxical: at odds with what the world and her conscious mind claims for them. The significance of Otto's death is illustrated by what in psychological parlance is called 'insertion'. Insertion is the name given to any message containing another message unconsciously preferred to what is on the face of it being communicated. Aurelia told Sylvia of her father's death on the day after

its occurrence. Soon afterwards Sylvia wrote, and asked her mother to sign, these words:

I promise never to marry again.

On reading these words for the first time one really does suppose the promise to be the daughter's. It seems probable that Sylvia did comprehend the paradoxical meanings of events; could penetrate their contradictions, but only in the throes of composition: that her day to day thinking maintained an ironic ascendancy over subversive possibilities.

The marital breakdown had the consequence of leaving her alone with the children, who constituted not only a great responsibility, but posed a considerable threat to one whose energetic efforts to care for them may be seen as a compensation for deeper feelings that children were destructive of herself as an artist. Ted's departure thus intensified her negative feelings toward Frieda and Nick, causing guilt and anger on their mother's part, much of which, if not all of which, had to be denied in order both to get through each day, and to accord with her idealistic, conventional notions of herself. Gain, on the other hand, is any experience augmenting, or embodying, Sylvia in her own being. Apart from pregnancy, the approval of her mother, and the balance of her life coming out in accordance with the favourable reckoning determined by recollections and fantasies of Otto — these could yield gain.

We come now to the prominence of October and November as months of composition. Sylvia wrote regularly and, during the last two years, with increasing rapidity. It is reasonable to suppose that the dates of completion for poems set out in *Collected Poems*, 1981, gives one a fairly accurate knowledge of the months of composition. If this is so then the months October and November are remarkably productive. Taking the three years 1960, '61 and '62 — the years during which almost every poem is given the exact date of completion — there is a total of 88, 42 of which were written within the months October and November. The proportion of 'autumnal' poems belonging to 1962 is even higher. Of 56 poems in all 25 belong to October and 11 to November: that is to say, 36 or well over half. Excluding 'Juvenilia', and looking at those poems set out under the years from 1956 to the shortened year of her death in 1963, the year 1962 not only yields the greatest total (56) but contains the greatest concentration of work now regarded as her finest: that by which her reputation is to be judged. Indeed, all the poems named by Edward Butscher as 'masterpieces' — a choice few would dispute — were written in October, with the exception of 'Berck-Plage'. Further, all but 'The Moon' and 'The Yew Tree' (October 1961) appeared in 1962.

The existence of statistically significant correlations cannot be established from a simple analysis of the kind now offered, and what follows in support of the idea that much of Plath's work was a response to a balance of loss and gain may be no more than merely suggestive. But suggestive it undoubtedly is. Ted Hughes believed that childbirth was good for his wife's literary creativity, though he doesn't say why. Of course, Sylvia responded to what others would regard as joyful occasions as well as to those fostering

'gain' in her own hidden terms. We must also consider the effect of gain and loss working together. What is suggested now is that her best work — which is to say her most powerful, or that culminating in *Ariel* — owed its existence more to the impetus of loss than to the effect of gain. One cannot identify, except here and there, poems characteristic of either (not in terms of their content), while the number of poems, until 1962-63, yields confusing results. But there seems little doubt that significant links between this woman's life and work are manifest not only in the number of poems but in the number of those of the highest quality, accomplished in the main from the beginning of 1961 onwards in the months of October and November.

The most obvious connection between output and loss — until, that is to say we come to look at 1962 — may be seen immediately following the miscarriage of 6 February 1961. Seven poems were completed and, we may infer, composed during the remainder of that month of February. They are 'Parliament Hill Fields', 'Whitsun', 'Zoo Keeper's Wife', 'Face Lift', 'Morning Song', 'Barren Woman', 'Heavy Woman'. On the 28th of the same month she suffers another loss, this time her appendix which although not comparable in severity to the previous loss was another blow against wholeness. It is compounded loss which acts most strongly on Plath. On the 18th of March 'In Plaster' was finished, one of the poems we know she was writing during her recovery from the operation. Hughes said of these poems that they were 'the first sign of what was on its way' — the altered Plath who from then on wrote at top speed without the aid of her thesaurus, 'as one might write an urgent letter'. From then on, says Hughes, 'all her poems were written in this way'. It is unwise to insist on gain and loss as separate experiences acting independently and indistinguishably in particular poems.

There is a subtle balance throughout her life. It is only at certain crucial times that the work is clearly driven along as a response to loss. It is curious, one notices in passing, that each birth is followed by an interval of approximately four months before a peak of creativity occurs. Frieda's birth, 1 April 1960 is followed in June by one poem and then in July by four. Thereafter, October sees three, followed by two appearing in each of the two succeeding months. Nicholas was born in January, 1962, and there is one poem to notice in March before the peak in April. If Nicholas's birth is, on balance, an experience of loss for his mother, then this 'happy event' is the first, within 1962, of a series of heavy losses whose additive effect is most of Plath's best work written with tremendous intensity and speed. Although it isn't quite clear when the marriage began to deteriorate, a careful examination of *Letters Home* discovers June to be a month of exceptional strain and tension. Ted left her in August, and in November Sylvia was living in London with the children. We must remember too that October and November continued at this difficult time to exert their special meaning. We are, therefore, confronted by a series of losses, each one augmenting the rest; each interacting within the complicated reverberating circuits of Sylvia's mind. Even if one choses to ignore Nicholas's birth, one must surely attach significance to the production of 54 poems from

June, 1962 until February, 1963: including 26 written in October and 11 in November. Her death in February comes, inevitably one feels, as the crowning loss. The remarkable 12 poems of those remaining weeks are surely the continuation of her response to sustained unrelieved loss.

Why did she take her own life? There has been much speculation and it would be pointless and wearisome to rake it all over here. Most of the explanations are, like those applied to her life, either Freudian or Feminist. There are commentators, too, anxious not to promote the myth of the artist who dies for her art. Alvarez, in particular, deplores the myth of Plath the sacrificial victim. What he offers in its place is scarcely satisfying:

> The pity is not that there is a myth of Sylvia Plath but that the myth is not simply that of an enormously gifted poet whose death came carelessly by mistake, and too soon. (*The Savage God*).

But Plath had almost certainly done nothing carelessly in her life. The gamble of the gas oven was not carelessness. And as for 'too soon', too soon for what or for whom? For her children it could have been later.

Could anyone now expect Sylvia to have continued to write poetry at such a cost to herself? Sylvia lived and died for herself. She was entitled by the logic of a self-centred life to die when she chose, as others with their roots in the soil of common love cannot. She was, moreover, too active, too controlling to wait for a natural death. There would have been ignominy in that. Nor would she have consented to fade into old age, into mellow distinction. It is hard to imagine what else after *Ariel* she could have written. Further, how could this over-sensitive young woman who longed for acceptance, for glory, for admiration just as ardently as she despised those who accord fame, have lived on with *Ariel*? She had felt badly about *The Bell Jar* as a work of disclosure. *Ariel* would have been impossible to live with. She had burned her boats. After 'Edge' one of them had to go. She killed herself. The unpublished poems she left behind. She could have destroyed them too. Nor did she kill her children in the manner of some who are desperately depressed and despairing. Between them, the poems and the children were too much for her. But if Sylvia had been able to chose instead between the poems and the children, then the decision would have been agonising and the outcome fearful to contemplate.

[Dr. Patrick Wakeling has worked as a child and family psychiatrist.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN ENGLAND

by Eric Glasgow

ENGLAND in the nineteenth century effectively gave to the world many noteworthy and lasting benefits. These included steam-engines, cheap and reliable postal services, and public libraries. In all such cases, perhaps, the pioneering development was subsequently taken over by other countries, often with greater resources, and so it was transformed out of all recognition compared with its first English models. Nevertheless, it remains useful and significant that the original idea and intention came from England, and often as a necessary or desirable accompaniment of the English experience as the 'first industrial nation'.

As today we may lament the threats to our public libraries, arising out of the current financial stringencies in local government, we may wish to recollect how and why the movement for public libraries began, because it is remarkably and peculiarly English, and a direct outcome of the cultural devastation caused by the Industrial Revolution in England. It arose out of the sense of cultural deprivation produced by what, long ago, J.L. and Barbara Hammond called 'the Bleak Age'. That title is in itself a timely reminder that public libraries in England were initiated, not primarily as sources of information — that was already being done by George Birkbeck's 'Mechanics' Institutions', after 1826 — but rather as sources of inspiration: feeding the heart and the imagination, as much as the mind and the head. They were intended to sustain and to embellish the poetry as well as the prose of life. Their initial purpose was never wholly or perhaps even intentionally utilitarian; and it is good to remember that under the pressures of our own very materialistic times.

I can still remember the times, forty or more years ago, when our public libraries were widely regarded as the potential 'universities of the poor', to which a wider populace so frequently went, in search of guidance and illumination, rather than amusement or entertainment. Such were the lingering Victorian ideals, about the aims of public libraries, which we in the twentieth century so amply inherited from such energetic pioneers of public libraries as the great Gladstone himself. One has only, even today, to look around the shelves of Gladstone's own continuing foundation — St. Deiniol's Library at Hawarden in Wales — in order to understand his personal interest in public libraries. If he had not been a statesman, he might have been a librarian. He spent so much of his life struggling with books: their mounting numbers, their controversial contents, and their recurrent additions to knowledge. He was an early supporter of the Public Libraries Act of 1850, after which the new profession came into being, and then it needed all the support that it could muster.

Apart from his private reading — in his famous 'Temple of Peace' at Hawarden Castle — Gladstone assembled after 1894 in his final literary memorial of St. Deiniol's Library a very impressive and significant gathering of books about public libraries, some but by no means all of them

given to him on ceremonial occasions when he attended to open such beneficial institutions. Gladstone possessed, for example, the famous 'Memoirs of Libraries' (1859), by Edward Edwards (1812-1886), described by Richard Garnett as 'erudite and industrious but not sufficiently discriminating'. Gladstone also possessed by the same author a supplementary volume of 1865, entitled 'Libraries and Founders of Libraries'. It is not always fully understood how deeply Gladstone studied public libraries: their objectives, their funding, and their organization. For him, certainly, they became an essential part of the pervasive and popular culture, supplementing the Education Act of 1870, and providing the educational foundations of his vision of political democracy in Victorian England. It was evidently no use extending the franchise to include every male adult, if there was nothing very much that was sensible or responsible in the heads which were thus so methodically and meticulously to be counted.

The Liberal idea of political democracy in Victorian England, therefore, depended very much upon general educational improvements, which extended from the school to the library, and from childhood into as much as possible of the harsher world of adult concerns. For Gladstone, as for the best of the 'Eminent Victorians', public libraries were expressly intended to promote a love of both knowledge and books, calculated to produce better citizens and so a more reliable political democracy: the great social experiment of those times, by no means without its accompanying social and economic difficulties and perils.

Because the need for public libraries was the most obvious alongside Blake's 'dark, satanic mills', the movement for them began in Northern England, the region most directly affected by the social ravages of the Industrial Revolution. Significantly, the first active promoter of public libraries in England was a native of Liverpool: William Ewart (1798-1869). He was returned as MP for Liverpool in 1830 and held the seat until 1837. He was out of the House of Commons between 1837 and 1839, when he was returned for Wigan. He remained there until 1841, when he was returned for Dumfries Town in Scotland, which he continued to represent until his retirement from politics in 1868.

His interest in public libraries was derived from his intense belief in the importance of 'popular education'. Ewart was by no means alone in his crusade for public libraries. Many other 'Radicals' supported him; including Lord Brougham, John Bright, W. J. Fox, Joseph Hume and Richard Cobden. It is true that he incurred the vehement if rather picturesque wrath of that die-hard Tory, Colonel Sibthorp, of Lincoln, who opposed all public libraries, arguing that 'he disliked reading as an occupation'. Ewart, however, managed to ensure the legalization of public libraries in England, under the crucial Public Libraries Act of 1850 (which for the first time by statute separated libraries from museums as public institutions). But, at that stage, he was obliged to accept a compromise, by which the Act was not to be adopted by any town, unless two-thirds of the rate-payers had given their consent. No money might be spent on buying books, which accordingly tended at first to be an ill-considered

miscellany of old volumes sent forth from the private collections of the opulent or the generous. Still, it was a beginning, if a small and uncertain one.

Manchester in 1852 was the first town to open a public library under the Act (hence its appointment of the turbulent Edward Edwards as its first Librarian). Liverpool did not use the Act of 1850. Instead, its first public library was opened, in Duke Street under a local Act. That was also in the year 1852. It proved to be so popular that it was replaced, in 1860, by the famous 'Brown Library'. Liverpool's public libraries eventually became among the greatest Victorian achievements of the City: the most evident and influential of all the local expressions of 'civic pride', an awareness of a shared communal identity, transcending all social and economic rivalries and differences. The Picton Reading Room — rotund and echoing like the British Museum in London — came later, in 1879. It was a permanent and fitting memorial to Sir James Picton (1805-1889), historian of Liverpool and personification of the 'local patriotism' of a great City at the height of its immense Victorian prosperity and fame.

Significantly, by far the best use of the Public Libraries Act of 1850 was initially made in Northern England, and within the first decade of its availability. Thus, up to 1860, it had been effectively utilized to establish public libraries in such an interesting diversity of places as Bolton, St. Helens, Birkenhead, Preston, and Sheffield. Thereafter, of course, the enabling legislation became more generous and extensive, and by the end of the nineteenth century few localities in England, of any considerable size, lacked a public library of some sort. Public libraries are, among our continuing debts to the foresight of our Victorian ancestors. Inevitably, they have since greatly expanded in scope and intention; and abroad, especially in America and in Scandinavia, the idea has been taken up and transformed, almost out of all recognition, as a result of vastly greater financial resources.

Nevertheless, as symbols and symptoms of popular culture, pervading whole communities, public libraries are distinctively English, and they should be acknowledged as such. They remain with us still, as identifiable items of our historical heritage; essentially and recognizably from the Victorian period. They have grown and expanded, with changing needs and expectations, in all of the ensuing years. Certainly, they have never been overfunded. Professionalism among their staffs has necessarily increased; and so has specialization. I am old enough to remember when antiquarianism was prominent as a feature of the historical basis of the local public library; old enough also, perhaps, to have some nostalgic regrets about its obvious passing. Times change, however, and so must our public libraries. 'Local studies,' with their present large intake of community and environmental studies, are now often very different from the cloistered calm, the dusty remoteness, of so many public libraries when first I was engaged with the joys of historical research. The young must be given their chances; although it is also fitting that 'the wisdom of our

ancestors' — embalmed in historical records — should be perceived and admitted.

Such are the current difficulties of local funding, that public libraries are bound to believe themselves under threat, and frequently — as in Derbyshire — to be in specific danger of closure or curtailment. It may be useful to remember that at no time in the whole of their history, at any rate in England, have public libraries been relieved of financial shortages and anxieties. Priorities in aims and services have always been unavoidable. There has never been very much public money about to sustain public libraries, in any shape or form. What perhaps is now required is not the simplistic solution of throwing more and more money at the problem — a concession to our contemporary materialism which will never be granted, let alone effective in practice — but instead a recovery of the pioneering and sacrificial spirit of our Victorian ancestors, towards the whole question of the public libraries. Often it is not more money that is so urgently required, but better discernments about the standards, in both arts and literature, which public libraries in England were originally established to sustain. For the Victorians, at any rate, they were institutions dedicated to upholding traditional values in both arts and literature, and the old-fashioned sorts of librarians — often poor as church mice — remained largely content to fulfil a vocation which was fundamentally more concerned with books than with people, and did not live on the vagaries of fashion or of topicality.

TEACHING CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

by Sarah Newman

A recent edict of Kenneth Clarke, Secretary of State for Education aims to stop history teaching covering the last twenty years. This avoidance of what is regarded as an area of potential indoctrination seems to me most unfortunate. Admittedly it does not apply to pupils in the sixth form but it is surely unnecessarily protective of those under the school-leaving age.

I have been teaching contemporary history for many years. Certainly much of this has been to the sixth form, and it is this I shall write about first. It is a subject I have consistently taught 11 to 16 year olds. First to non-exam classes in the sixth: here, for thirty years after 1959, I taught what I called 'background to current affairs'. This, a historical perspective on areas of the world in the news at any one time, has usually been a compulsory part of general studies. It has also usually been a very popular aspect of study in the sixth.

I have been fortunate in that living in the London area I have had little difficulty in finding visiting speakers to give generously of their time and expertise, coming in for nothing more than travel expenses and school dinner, to talk to varying numbers of pupils on matters of immediate concern. The Council for Education in World Citizenship is, however, ready to provide speakers anywhere in the country, and in many areas lecturers from local institutes of higher education are ready to help out in this respect. But important as I have considered this aspect of teaching, I have been only too well aware that most pupils leave before reaching the sixth form, and so need a similar study lower down the school.

From 1964 to 1989 I taught 'A' Level courses on British Social and Economic History from 1815. At first this took the pupils up to their own day. Eventually the syllabus ended in 1973. Studying recent demography, for example, stimulated and helped develop skills in presenting an argument. Another favourite 'A' level paper for me was World History from 1945, later 1960, to the present day. This seemed a most valuable Advanced Level Study, it gave pupils something to talk to their parents about, and a focal point for their home TV viewing. From an examination point of view it was a real hazard, teaching Tudor England I could tell what was likely to be tested, in World History I could spend half a term studying Japan and find no related question in the examination. This was partly because I chose to teach Asia as an area, dealing with Japan, China and the Subcontinent, had I concentrated on the USA topics might have been more predictable, as it was we studied Asia, aspects of the USSR and Eastern Europe, some issues in Western Europe, and the General Section. For sixth form education I found it superb. So did the pupils. But a minority of the sixth, itself a minority in school, attended these classes. In many ways the pattern lower down the school was not dis-

similar. At every stage of the secondary school I tried to get Current Affairs into the timetable. I felt this to be particularly urgent as not all pupils studied history beyond the third year, when we had only reached the nineteenth century, so they really needed a background to current affairs, and this I believed the history department particularly able to provide. So for at least one year during their first five years, pupils would have this as a compulsory subject.

The other area of teaching where we studied the recent past was in GCSE. For British History we chose the period from 1870 to two years before the date the exam was taken. So I was teaching about the changing situation of women and about immigration and race relations up to virtually our own day. This part of the syllabus proved very popular indeed, and we geared part of our coursework to it. Many GCSE candidates remarked what a pity it was the rest of their class had not had the opportunity to study these topics. Other popular GCSE examination areas which will be truncated by a decision to remove from teachers the option of covering the last twenty years are papers in the Modern World 1914 to the present day and British Social and Economic History 1700 to the present day.

Presumably it is fear of indoctrination that leads to the decision to forbid such an approach in the future. How susceptible are 14-16 year olds to influence from their teachers? Is bias not detectable? Are the young not counter-suggestible? Can teachers not be trusted to do a professional job and present all aspects of a question, announce their own attitude openly if necessary, listen to other opinions? Is shielding the young from a study of our immediate past any asset to them in their immediate futures? Surely teachers deal best with areas of their subject that most interest them and that they have taken a personal decision to opt for.

With great enjoyment for many years, I taught the first year in secondary school aspects of ancient history, usually Ancient India, China, Sumer and Egypt. This seemed to me of benefit not only to children whose parents had come from Asia, but to the entire class: China and Egypt were particularly popular parts of the syllabus. This section recently I followed by a study of the rise of Islam, the conversion of Britain to Christianity, and the coming of the Vikings. At the start of the second year some children clearly welcomed a more conventional study of the mediaeval period, but the majority had relished the introductory survey, difficult though some of the concepts involved were, including Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, as well as traditional Chinese philosophy, in class-work for the 11-12 year olds. But just as young children can cope with more than is sometimes expected of them, and can delight in the ideas of remote and alien societies, so they need to understand how the world in which they are growing up has evolved; whatever their futures they are going to be enfranchised members of a complex society in a country increasingly involved with and affected by the wider world. Just as they are at a disadvantage if unable to read or write, if innumerate or frightened of technology, so they are deprived if they are unaware of how the past,

including the immediate past, impinges on the present and how developments in the wider world impinge upon us.

The influence of parents and peer group is so strong that teachers' bias is unlikely to lead even the most malleable astray. Schools are equipped with TV and videos so it is possible to use programmes that help illuminate the topic under consideration and provide alternative approaches. Visiting speakers will likewise offset the slant given by the individual teacher. Moreover those who worry about the effects of teacher bias might well take comfort from the fact that one of the skills for which GCSE history is meant to provide training is that of spotting bias in source material. Admittedly not all children stay the course till GCSE, and with history for years four and five recently losing its original compulsory status in the core curriculum even fewer may be able to opt for it. However any skills needed for GCSE are likely to be tackled at some stage in the first three years of secondary education. And if children are on the alert for bias in source material, they may prove not unaware of bias among the teaching staff. It is also possible to share the teaching of recent history so that children do not receive one viewpoint alone. My colleague and I each taught two periods with each GCSE group, and if something like background to current affairs is provided for younger pupils different enthusiasts should be able to take over, if not during the year then as the class moves up a year.

Bias is of course not confined to those teaching contemporary history. It is as likely to be present in those dealing with Britain in the nineteenth century, or struggling to tackle the history of the Reformation. It might be true that there would be benefits if all in Northern Ireland, for instance, were to forget their past, but legend would doubtless replace it, myth-making unsubjected to historical scrutiny might not prove advantageous.

What do historians teach that is bias free? Is there no value in tackling topics about which the young may have some views and giving them a chance to air their opinions on immediate issues? Painful as their attitudes only too often may be, their ignorance and bias can be responded to, the views they absorb in playground and home environment discussed. Production of factual material may never pierce the shell of prejudice, not to attempt it is defeatist in the extreme. Not to provide a viewpoint counter to that prevailing in establishment or locality is failing to offer scope for argument, to open another window on the world.

Since it seems likely history teachers are the most fit to teach contemporary history why take the option of doing so from them? Since those teaching English, geography, modern languages may well be touching on topical themes why remove the past twenty years from the subject matter of those staff whose education and training are more likely to qualify them to tackle contentious areas of the curriculum? Why deprive the majority of pupils of a study of issues that will impinge directly upon them for fear that not all history teachers are sufficiently professional to educate them in a significant area of study in suitable style?

FIVE POEMS

by Raymond Tong

AT NIMRUD, IRAQ

The conical hill that hides the temple,
the huge mounds and the ruined palace,
the winged bulls at the gates of silence,
the desolation of the Assyrian plain,
all seem to murmur it is Man,
not men, that has significance;
it is Birth and Death that matter,
not infinite petty births and deaths.

Here only the rarest names
are whispered by the envious wind:
Sennacherib and Sargon,
Hammurabi, maker of laws,
all-conquering Alexander.
Though dust within forgotten tombs
the grass still ripples with their deeds,
their mighty gestures against Fate.

There is awe and wonder in the air.
One should not dwell here overlong.
Only the cold ascetic can regret
returning southwards to the city,
to the comfort and the wretchedness,
to the little joys and consolations,
where men, within their fleeting span,
strive to give meaning to their lives.

KUWAIT: A MEMORY

Here oil and water resplendently
combine to create a new Babylon.
Everywhere bulldozers attack
the surrounding desert, preparing the way
for more acres of steel and concrete,
while cars jam the broad avenues.

Yet troubled by the vast possibilities
always the anxious gaze returns to the sea.
The restless mind escapes beyond the city
boundaries to undulating sands.

Down tunnels of regret the memory
drifts back to relics of mud walls,
the fishing fleet of dhows upon the bay,
the nomadic murmurings in the veins.

AL-UKHAIDIR, IRAQ

Leaving Kerbela the road becomes a track
and south-westward the deserts of Arabia
stretch all the way to Mecca and Medina.

A few miles out into the lonely waste
stands Al-Ukhaidir, the haunted ruins
of a pleasure-palace built by an early caliph.

Desolate beside a shrunken wadi,
the circular buttresses and vaulted colonnades,
neither Byzantine nor Persian,

are perhaps the first bold step
in the evolution of an Arab style found
from the Bay of Biscay to the Indus.

The massive walls and open-ended hall,
with its elegant archway, created amid
the fierce certainty of a new religion,

still seem to echo with the passing hooves,
the impatient cries of lean fanatic horsemen,
eager for Damascus and the cities beyond.

ASHURBANIPAL

When in the diamond clarity of dawn,
in a long-forgotten springtime,
Ashurbanipal went riding out
through the great gate of Nineveh,
he never for one moment cast a glance
towards the human skins upon the walls,
the tattered corpses impaled on spikes.

Acknowledging the adulation
of his people, returning the salute
of the Royal Guard, tall and upright
on his proudly trotting sleek black mare,

he passed beneath the massive winged bulls,
the sculptured reliefs recording his victories,
over the narrow bridge to the waiting plain.

Then being fresh from sleep and eager
for the chase, he went galloping away,
accompanied by a troop of mounted bowmen,
towards the promise of the impassive hills.

DESERT THOUGHTS

Empires rise and fall
and are slowly buried
by the drifting sands.
The desert is littered
with the ruins of cities
where the good-intentioned
once dreamed their dreams
and failed to recognize
the limits of the human heart,
where they mistook
affluence of the body
for affluence of the soul,
where they failed to detect
the daggers in the cloaks
of their malignant brothers,
and through their indolence
or self-deception refused
to read the writing on the wall.

Editor's note: Raymond Tong spent five years with the British Council in Iraq and Kuwait. These five poems come from his *Crossing the Border* published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1978. Nimrud was the ancient Assyrian military capital, situated between Nineveh and Ashur, where as Byron says 'the Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.' Ashurbanipal was king of Assyria from 668 to 626 BC. Besides being a ruthless general, he was a patron of the arts and learning.

CORNWALL IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE

by A. L. Rowse

CORNWALL is not an ordinary English county: it is a little land on its own, more comparable with Welsh Pembroke or Cardigan. Right up to the Elizabethan age it had its own language, its sense of separateness, and a certain resentment at losing it. Indeed there were two notable reactions against being pressed into the Tudor state. The rising of 1497, when we Cornishmen got up as far as Blackheath, was a rebellion against the imposition of tax — the English have always been too easy-going about being taxed. The rebellion of 1549 was a more partisan affair against the new English Prayer Book. After that we gave no more trouble.

To European culture and the world abroad Cornwall means the Arthurian Saga. We must make no exclusive claim to the shadowy, if historic, post-Roman figure of Arthur, to whom most Celts were devoted: *quondam rexque futurus*, they held. But in some way the story of Mark, Tristram and Iseult is focussed on Cornwall, perhaps relates to Tintagel. Geoffrey of Monmouth put these stories into European literature — though they must have been there before — with his *History of the Kings of Britain*. No book, except the Bible, has had such a proliferating creative influence in the literatures and arts of Europe, giving Cornwall a lasting place in its imagination and consciousness.

There follows the Age of the Saints, alive to us in place-names, parish churches and holy wells. These worthies came over to us mostly from Wales, a few from Ireland, some went on to Brittany. In early times travel by coastal waters was easier than by land. The tin trade to the Mediterranean ante-dated the Saints by a thousand years or more, and lasted up to the last century. So to the outer world Cornwall in practice meant tin and copper, mines and miners, remarkable mining engineers; in our time, china clay.

In the Middle Ages a significant figure was John of Trevisa. He was the leading translator of the circle of Wyclif working from Latin into English. No less important, he took the lead in grammar school teaching in English away from French as hitherto. A native speaker of Cornish, he obviously was linguistically self-conscious and progressive.

In the Elizabethan age the long sea-struggle with Spain brought Cornwall into the front line and completed her absorption into the modern state. Cornishmen took part in the oceanic voyages — Hawkins' right hand man was Robert Barrett of Saltash, whom the Spaniards captured at Vera Cruz and burned at Seville. We took our share in the founding of the American colonies. Sir Richard Grenville planted the first at Roanoke on behalf of Raleigh. A Penhallow was Chief Justice of New Hampshire. Hugh Peters of Fowey — a Treffry on his mother's side — was one of the founders of Harvard. Even Longfellow had a Cornish descent through the Bonythons.

The increasing importance of the county was more than signalised by making so many little places Parliamentary boroughs. In the end besides two county MPs, some forty-two more. This really witnessed the growing power of the gentry; it gave the county an adventitious political importance right up to 1832. It did not mean more power to the monarchy. Indeed in Sir John Eliot it gave an intolerable Parliamentary opponent to Charles I. True, the Duchy played a considerable role in political and economic affairs. This remarkable institution, the Duchy of Cornwall with its broad lands in the county and more outside, had been set up by Edward III in 1336 for the support of the eldest son of the reigning monarch as Duke. As such it is still going today, playing a beneficent rôle and adding to Cornwall's uniqueness.

During the Civil War Cornishmen were very much to the fore. The famous 'Cornish Foot' won several battles for the King, until decimated at the siege of Bristol. Their best leaders were killed; the little land was fought over three times in 1643, 1644, 1645, occupied and eaten up by both Parliamentarian and Royalist armies. The tin trade was sucked dry. The county suffered terribly — famine and in some parts plague.

The rule of Cromwell could not endure: it rested on the army and a small minority of Puritan humbugs (iconoclasts and vandals into the bargain). With Charles II normal people came back, with the monarchy to keep society together. Royalist families were once more to the fore — Grenvilles and Godolphins. Sidney Godolphin, nephew and namesake of the poet who had been killed in 1643, became Queen Anne's Lord Treasurer. The only Cornishman to be a Prime Minister, he held things together at Westminster while Marlborough was reducing the over-mighty power of Louis XIV abroad. As such Godolphin was a prime instrument in fixing up the Union with Scotland in 1707 — a good job done, it has survived till today in spite of strains.

Where Devon seamen led in the Elizabethan age Cornishmen led in the eighteenth century. Hawke and Boscawen ran neck to neck in fame with their victories at sea, though it was Hawke who ended French sea power for the whole Seven Years War, at Quiberon Bay in 1759. Admiral Exmouth — he was a Pellew from Penryn — made a permanent contribution to the well-being of the nations with his complete reduction of the slave-power of Algiers, releasing thousands of Christian slaves. (The Admiral's fine house at Canonteign has just come on the market.) Captain Wallis, circumnavigator of the globe, first brought Tahiti to light.

And what about Bligh of the *Bounty*? He was a martinet, but no brute, and a superb navigator. To have piloted that open boat through open seas, from the scene of the mutiny in the Pacific to the East Indies, some 3,500 miles, and brought the remnant of his crew through to safety — what a splendid seaman! The only fault I find is that he was too upright and had no sense of humour. Also he had no luck (the Cornish are apt to be overlooked in that regard).

The Industrial Revolution made for Cornwall's chief contribution to Britain and the world. For the first quarter of the 19th century the county

produced more copper than the rest of the world together, and for three-quarters of the century Cornwall was a major producer of tin. With the deepening of the mines this led to a tremendous development of engineering, the dominance of the Cornish steam-pump, the rise of a remarkable school of engineers. They went all over the world to take the lead in mining; so did their engines. The biggest of these engines pumped out the inland sea of the Haarlem Meer, and is now laid up in Holland as a national monument. Mining, engineering, science — there the real Cornish genius is to be found. We may take two names from that time as examples. Sir Humphry Davy's genius was for chemistry, but his work also laid foundations in electro-magnetism, the application of chemistry to agriculture, the discovery of new elements like sodium. Richard Trevithick was a genius for practical inventions. He was the first to create a steam-locomotive to run on road and rail. Responsible for other inventions, he was not at all business-like in following them up, but took off for years mining in Peru. Goldsworthy Gurney, more practical, was prolific of inventions and effective in applying them. There was a host of aspiring engineers and mining captains who led all round the world. So too the miners, especially in America, South Africa, Australia.

All this led to an extraordinary explosion of energy in various fields, not least the mission field. Richard Lander discovered the source of the Niger, an age-long problem. The missionary Grenfell explored the course of the Congo. Bishop Colenso in Natal made himself the great defender of the Zulu people. He is still venerated by them, but at home is overlooked as the greatest biblical scholar of his time. A combination of mathematician and Hebrew scholar, he was hounded for opening the study of the Bible to common sense. His cousin, William Colenso, was the first naturalist of New Zealand, who sent home thousands of seeds and hundreds of plants. The explorer of a new flora, as well as of Maori language and culture.

Think what India owes to General Sleeman! He succeeded in suppressing the Thugs. They were a secret sect — fanatics in the Indian manner — who combined religion with murder. In a century or two they strangled and robbed thousands of people on the roads. Since they formed a secret cult, it took Sleeman twenty years to track them down and bring them to book. He was not entirely successful in his campaign to put down Suttee, the idiotic custom of burning widows alive after the death of husbands. Then there was all his work for afforestation, irrigation, education, setting standards of justice and incorrupt government, such as India may well regret today. Cornwall made a great cult of Henry Martin, the missionary contemporary with good Bishop Heber. He was a remarkable linguist, whose translations from and into Persian, Arabic, Hindi, may be regarded as more remarkable. He accomplished a lot in a short life — several books have been devoted to him.

So far as literature and the arts are concerned the case is peculiar. Our most eminent writers have been half-Cornish. The Brontës were Cornish on their mother's side, Irish on their father's — pure Celts, we may say.

Yorkshire annexed them. Keats and Matthew Arnold were half-Cornish. So too in our time Quiller Couch (the famous 'Q') and Charles Causley, a genuine poet as against the mish-mash promoted by the media today. For the Trevelyans, prolific in their works, we have to go right back to the Middle Ages for their source, though they all recognise it.

Though Cornwall has been a great inspiration to artists, particularly in this century, we ourselves have not been to the fore in the arts. Celts are not aesthetes. This stands out all the more when we reflect how much good painting has come out of the schools of Newlyn and St. Ives — but by others. Similarly with writing — a good many writers have adopted and adapted Cornwall for their work — not the same thing as the real thing with Q. and me. Bernard Leach, the greatest potter of his time, did much of his work at St. Ives, but Michael Cardew was the real thing. This reminds us that the china clay industry is our speciality and distinguishes us today. The chief American writer on ceramics, John Spargo, appropriately came from the granite back-country of Penryn.

I suppose I should say a word about nationalist feeling. Oddly enough, my particular mentor, Dr. Johnson, gave it a dismissive word. The area is too small for it to have any practical importance. Cornwall can only be a quarter the size even of Brittany, one sixth or seventh of Wales. In this age of mass civilization, cosmopolitan pop culture much the same everywhere I am all in favour of *difference*, characteristic inflexions, regionalism, local colour. This is rather a subtle matter and requires more than a minority group wagging its tail. It requires understanding and imagination, a sense of history, the ability to look under the short-term surface of things, to penetrate to the real character and continuity underneath.

[After a distinguished career as an historian in Oxford, Dr. Rowse has retired to his native county. His books include: *Tudor Cornwall, The Cornish in America, The Controversial Colensos*, (published by Truran, Redruth, Cornwall).]

Literary Supplement

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The Civil War, an illustrated history of the War Between the States. Geoffrey Ward, with Ric Burns and Ken Burns. Bodley Head. £30.00.

When, during the first major battle of the American Civil War — Bull Run, or Manassas as the Confederates called it — a Union shell tore through the kitchen of Wilmer McLean's farmhouse, he decided to move to a dusty little crossroads town to the south-west, where he hoped never to see another soldier. It was called Appomattox Court House. He moved in vain, for four years later it was in his parlour that Northern commander Ulysses Grant met Confederate leader Robert E. Lee, to discuss the terms to end the War that the North called the War of Rebellion, which to Southerners was (and still is) the War Between the States. But McLean at least survived, in a war in which three million Americans fought, and 600,000 lost their lives.

Geoffrey Ward's text was the product of five years of research and writing, editing and filming, since it is the narrative of the ten-hour documentary film shown in the United States in 1990 and in Britain a few months later. It records not only extracts from the strikingly literate letters and diaries of many who fought, but also some 500 illustrations from the first war to be 'covered' by photographers and balloonists.

This is a splendid and moving tale, handsomely presented, of the most important and most disturbing event in American history. From it came the end of legal slavery and of the planter aristocracy of the South; from it too came the beginning of big industry, big business and big government. As a brothers' war, it was savage and cruel beyond imagining. Virginia suffered acutely — and in the end so did much of Georgia and the Carolinas. The small town of Winchester, in the Shenandoah Valley, changed hands on seventy-two occasions. The state of Missouri sent thirty-nine regiments to the siege of Vicksburg, seventeen fighting for the Confederacy and twenty-two for the Union. Mrs. Lincoln's husband was assassinated as she sat at his side in their box in the theatre; she was a Kentuckian from a distinguished slave-owning family; four of her brothers fought for the Confederacy, and one of them was killed. No wonder that she became mentally unbalanced. This is a story rich in horror, in brutality and in heroism. And — though it is not part of the tale — it was a war that some scholars claim need never have been fought at all; and the blacks, freed in law as a result of it, had to wait at least another century before earning a more genuine freedom.

ESMOND WRIGHT

TWO DICTATORS

Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. Alan Bullock. Harper Collins. £20.00.

This book has nearly 1,200 well-printed pages, 24 pages of photographs, with up to four pictures squeezed on to each page, and 18 maps, most of them not very useful. Its low price — only £20 till the end of 1991 — testifies to a very large print-run and the confidence of its publishers that it will be a mass-seller.

The concept of parallel lives does not work badly: there was something so claustrophobic about the lives of both Hitler and Stalin that throughout the book it is a relief to be able to escape from the dreariness of the one to the dreariness of the other, even if the final cumulative effect is doubly depressing. At the same time the adoption of a parallel approach, especially in such a

long book, does not prevent the reader from expecting the author to say something new about each of his parallel subjects. In his previous books, *Hitler, a Study in Tyranny* and *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, Lord Bullock showed that though he possessed the copious pen of a Boswell, he lacked many other qualifications for a biographer, especially that of making his subjects come alive on the page. In the present volume, Stalin remains as opaque as he has always been, but one is struck by how pedestrian Lord Bullock's presentation of Hitler is compared to, say, Joachim Fest's. In such a long book there is of course a large quantity of useful data, but even larger quantities are to be found in other books, even shorter ones, dealing with the same topics. Lord Bullock's handling of key passages in the careers of his two subjects is generally sketchy and unoriginal, though his treatment of Hitler's personal role in and knowledge of the physical liquidation of the Jews is excellent (pp.833-845). It would of course be unfair to expect too much in the way of new tit-bits of information, new surprises, about two such well-researched figures; presumably therefore the parallel approach is the main justification for writing the book in the first place. Yet it is not altogether clear why Hitler and Stalin should be presented as a pair: not clear what it was that they uniquely had in common.

To say that Hitler and Stalin were the two most evil men of the first half of the Twentieth Century is not very helpful. Evil is a debatable term, and in most definitions of the word there were probably several other men equally evil, even though less celebrated. To say that Hitler and Stalin were the two men who brought horror and disaster down upon the largest number of individuals, is simply to underline a crucial difference between them: most of Hitler's direct victims were foreigners whom he viewed as members of inferior races, whereas most of Stalin's victims were his fellow-citizens. It is the difference between Genghis Khan and Pol Pot.

Lord Bullock more than once writes that 'race' for Hitler played the same role as 'class' for Stalin. This is a little too glib, especially as class-consciousness had a role in Hitler's ideology just as, ultimately, anti-Semitism had an attraction for Stalin. Again, Lord Bullock contrasts Hitler's coming to power as the leader of a movement of which he was essentially the creator, with Stalin's seizure of the leadership of a revolutionary party that was already installed in power, the suggestion being that the two different modes of establishing a dictatorship, once acknowledged, can be subordinated to the essential similarities of the two careers. In fact, though the behavioural patterns of the two dictators showed a significant and sinister convergence, they were operating within two quite dissimilar political frameworks.

The dictatorships of Hitler, Mussolini and, to some extent Dollfuss in Austria, represent a kind of fevered acceleration of the twentieth-century democratic process. Intimidation, gerrymandering, cynical manipulation of electoral law, tactical alliances with former enemies, were all within a basic framework of an appeal to a mass electorate and the presentation of the party leader as a popular tribune. It was because they in a sense understood, without believing in, democracy that Hitler and Mussolini were so successful in exploiting its political potential; their dictatorships were not so much a rejection but a perversion of democracy, and could only have emerged in the era of mass politics. Stalin belonged to an earlier tradition, dating back to the eighteenth century, of a revolutionary elite, politically and ideologically far in advance of the majority of the community, who would promote the community's best interests whether the community was ready for it or not. This

revolutionary tradition, which had developed as an alternative to, and in parallel with, the extension of participatory democratic forms, necessarily placed a special emphasis on the ideology which bound the revolutionaries together, and on past revolutionary achievements which served to link the revolutionaries of successive generations with their predecessors. In seizing control of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, Stalin had also to seize control both of the party's ideology and, in a sense, of its historical role in the 1917 Revolutions (the history of the October Revolution, in which he had had only a minor part, had to be rewritten so as to emphasize Stalin's importance). Later, despite a continuing pretence of maintaining a collective leadership, in keeping with the time-honoured tradition that revolution was to be carried forward by a progressive elite, Stalin established a cult of his own personality just as Mussolini and Hitler had done. (The pioneer of the twentieth-century personality cults seems however to be Atatürk, representing a third kind of political development.) Stalin's attempt to monopolise Soviet Communism, though indicating a deformation of personality analogous to Hitler's, does not alter the fact that he inherited, or kidnapped, his revolution, whereas Hitler and Mussolini created theirs.

Stalin's role and personality before 1924 is not dissimilar to that of Martin Bormann in 1941-5; if Nazism had survived Hitler as a significant movement it is very likely that Bormann would have moled his way to the succession, just as Stalin did after the death of Lenin; but the whole point is that Stalin lacked both the personality and the talent to do what Mussolini and Hitler did, that is, to create a mass-movement and lead it to power. On the other hand, the fact that he was taking over an existing movement and adjusting it to his own personality caused him to spend a lot of time, and other men's blood, on matters that had no importance for Hitler. Having inherited a revolution and an ideology, Stalin found himself alongside other men who had inherited them to an equal degree: these had to be eliminated. Hitler having created his revolution and his ideology found himself surrounded mainly by men who hero-worshipped him: apart from Röhm it was hardly necessary to liquidate anyone who approximately shared his views. Having achieved his position by manipulating the German electorate, Hitler reserved his paranoia for the German professional classes; having achieved his position largely in spite of the Russian masses, Stalin included them within the generalised paranoia which characterized his leadership style. One almost feels that Hitler, despite his indifference to individuals, loved Germany with a neurotic, solipsistic, diseased, destructive yet not wholly unromantic yearning, whereas Stalin loved nothing, and was attracted to Communism by its dogmatism, impersonality and potential for negativeness.

Both Hitler and Stalin were political perverters, but they were perverting different kinds of politics. Perhaps Lord Bullock holds the view (shared it seems by Hitler and Stalin) that one form of perversion is very much like another. But historians should work to sharpen discrimination, not the opposite. Of course there are resemblances between Hitler and Stalin, but there are also resemblances between these two men and various other contemporaries which would probably provide more insight into their careers. In the end what links Hitler and Stalin is their status as the two great mythic bogeymen of the twentieth century, and to take this shared status as a starting point for historical research is, ultimately, simply to perpetuate myth.

A. D. HARVEY

A DISTINGUISHED ACTRESS

Looking Forward — Looking Back: An Autobiography. Dulcie Gray. Hodder & Stoughton. £14.95.

For half a century Dulcie Gray has been an ornament of English theatre, performing in every medium: the stage, radio, film and television. For almost the whole of that time she has been married to an equally versatile actor, Michael Denison.

Anyone who has enjoyed performances by either of them will be certain to relish this book. It has all the qualities of a good autobiography for it not only tells the story of a life and a career from the personal perspective but opens a door into another world. Actually, in Dulcie Gray's case, we should say two worlds. As well as depicting the world of acting, she provides a wonderful account of the life and attitudes of a 'colonial' girl in Malaysia. Unlike many memoirs by actors this is a real book for Miss Gray is also a talented writer of successful mystery stories.

The greatness of the English stage springs from the days of touring companies. It is that tradition and its continuance that lifts the great English actors far above the tinsel, bulging muscles, and glimmering teeth of the Hollywood mob. Throughout her book Dulcie Gray provides a humourous account of the difficulties as well as the delights of an actress on tour. She and her husband are still doing this, bringing such a great play as Hugh Whitemore's *The Best of Friends* to theatres throughout the country.

Miss Gray provides many enjoyable anecdotes about other actors and actresses. These are always told with wit and kindness. For only one person does she express strong dislike. This is for the vicious critic, Kenneth Tynan, a tawdry twentieth century version of Dr. Johnson's Dick Minim the critic. Her dislike is based not only on Tynan's nasty reviews of her own performances, but on his vile behaviour towards Vivien Leigh. The loathsome way in which Tynan set out to ruin a disturbed woman should be required reading for any future critic.

For future historians this book will be an invaluable introduction into a vibrant era of British theatrical history. Yet from an historian's perspective, the early chapters on her life in Malaysia may prove of even greater value. Hers is one of the best accounts of what it was like to grow up in far flung corners of the Empire and then to come 'home'. The final passages in the book are very moving as the author contemplates the prospect of old age. Yet her dedication both on stage and in this sprightly book to the art of bringing enjoyment to others will undoubtedly ward off that spectre for many a year to come.

RICHARD MULLEN

A PRIME MINISTER'S LIFE

Macmillan 1894-1956: Volume One of the Official Biography. Alistair Horne. Macmillan Papermac. £11.99.

In a long life, Macmillan played many roles. When they married, Lady Dorothy said that she thought she was marrying a publisher — and as a back-bench politician, he could work every week-day morning at his publishing house in St. Martin's Street, and often walk to it. Reticent, shy, for long sick with dread before his public speeches, the images of 'unflappable' and 'Supermac' were carefully contrived, the product of much agonising — and of much loneliness.

Born to upper-middle-class comfort and educated at Eton and Oxford, he

never forgot that his great-grandfather was born on a croft on the Isle of Arran, off the Scottish coast. The First War cut short his Balliol years: in the Grenadier Guards he was just in time for the battle of Loos, where he was twice wounded, to be wounded again three times and seriously on the Somme, before being invalided home for a long and painful convalescence. Though married to a Duke's daughter and counting the Dukes of Devonshire as his in-laws (with Christmases at Chatsworth a required occasion, and his visits there endurance tests to be suffered — he was one of fourteen sons, daughters and in-laws, surrounded by — in one year — 28 children, fourteen of them under four, plus nannies, maids, valets and staff). Yet he served for 20 years as MP for industrialized Stockton on Teeside, with its inter-war period of Depression, and high unemployment; his public stance and his policies, his tracts and his advocacy became left-of-centre and even radical. His heroes then were Mosley (for a while), Herbert Morrison (for an even shorter time) — and Churchill. After 20 years on the backbenches and seen as what we would now call a 'wet', he was thrown by Churchill into World War 2 as Minister Resident in North Africa, where he had to handle de Gaulle, Giraud, Montgomery and Eisenhower, Greeks and Italians; he came to see himself as diplomat and even as statesman. Although in Churchill's government of 1951 he was given the job of building 300,000 houses a year, and achieving it, he came to see himself still more as Supermac, the style detached, cynical and aloof, able to ride storms at home and abroad, and then to go into his study and read his favourite Jane Austen. It all has the qualities of a bit of fiction, made — it might seem — for a TV soap opera.

One role, however, he failed to play satisfactorily: the family man. Although himself a totally faithful and devoted husband, he was savagely hurt by his wife's long liaison with Robert Boothby. For Macmillan it led to a nervous breakdown, and a long recovery in a Swiss clinic. Among the cognoscenti it was an open secret. It helped to breed the cynicism that was at the roots of Hugh Gaitskell's dislike of him — and perhaps at the roots of Harold Wilson's reluctant respect for him. He became the public Machiavelli and power-broker, who was in fact never at ease in the sophisticated worlds of Belgravia and Cliveden, and in the end he lived the life of a recluse in an empty Birch Grove. He did not want to know who slept with whom, nor the tittle-tattle of the lobbies. His ignorance of a world that was unfamiliar, and that he didn't want to know, in the end cost him his prime-ministership.

The figure that emerges from Alistair Horne's splendid biography is an idealist-turned-cynic, Hamlet, Polybius and Laertes all in one. As a portrait it is noble, touching and sad: a character now not only for television soap opera, but worthy material for Shakespeare, Trollope — or Jane Austen?

ESMOND WRIGHT

THE NONCONFORMISTS

The Nonconformists: In search of a lost culture, by James Munson. viii + 360pp. SPCK. £17.50.

Nonconformity was a powerful force in Victorian times. This is a comprehensive and objective study of it in England in its hey-day between 1890 and 1914.

Dr. Munson rightly connects its rise with the industrial revolution which brought workers from the countryside into towns. It was in towns that Puritan groups had kept together during a century and a half of persecution and then social ostracism after the Restoration of 1660. Excluded from public

office and the professions, they went into business. Some of them were very successful. They were respected, and as the towns grew so did the number of people who wished to associate with the dissenters. The industrial revolution, uprooting workers from gentry-dominated communities, the Methodist movement, dissatisfaction with the corrupt and dissolute ruling oligarchy, possibly other factors too may all have contributed to a great expansion of nonconformity about the time of the French Revolution and the subsequent wars. This part of its history is obscure and would repay closer study. It seems to have at least kept pace with a rapid and considerable increase in the total population of the country.

By the turn of the century it was clear that a great part of the wealth of the country was in businesses with which dissenters were concerned and they could no longer be ignored. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, the Reform Act of 1832 and the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 enabled them to participate in local and national government. They became an influential pressure group. Their Parliamentary representation was small until after the 1868 Reform Act, but then it grew steadily and by the end of the century was substantial considering that they never amounted to more than a sixth of the population.

Their forces were not always easy to mobilise, however. The old dissenters, the Congregationalists and Baptists and the few but very influential Unitarians and Quakers, were the most resolute and radical. Methodists were desirable allies because of their numbers, but the Wesleyans were really conservative. They held aloof from the Church because of its Catholic tendencies but were reluctant to attack it. Their popular appeal had reached lower down the social scale than the old dissenters, and the more plebeian sections tended to split off into radical movements which were politically closer to the old dissenters.

What such loosely associated groups could achieve was limited. Privilege was well entrenched. They could thwart it from time to time but not attain their own objectives. They never had any prospect of disestablishing the Church. In the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland they played an insignificant part, and they succeeded in disestablishing the Church of Wales only in 1914. They secured undenominational religious teaching in schools maintained by School Boards but not the stopping of grants to Church schools. On the 1902 Education Act they overbid their hand, and the passive resistance of a minority was a fiasco.

The phrase 'nonconformist conscience' was coined to describe their reaction to the Parnell scandal. They certainly were vociferous in demanding high standards of morality in people in responsible positions in public affairs. Only a few years previously they had forced a Cabinet minister, Sir Charles Dilke, out of office for getting himself involved in a divorce case. But they were probably expressing a widespread revulsion. Society had grown stricter about such matters as the century progressed. What had been acceptable in George IV's time was no longer tolerated in Victoria's.

It is often said that middle class respectability had become the prevailing standard, and nonconformity was identified with that multifarious class. It certainly was a middle class movement; its adherents frankly admitted the fact. It had taken a good deal of independence, financial as well as moral, to maintain the tradition in a hostile environment; people dependent on their social superiors could not afford it. But by Victorian times all religion was middle class, except that the Church included the gentry. Half the population ignored it. Disraeli's two nations were only too evident. Nonconformists

showed perhaps more missionary zeal than their rivals in trying to bring in converts from the disadvantaged nation. They were active in all kinds of social reform and assistance to those in need.

National campaigns and Parliamentary proceedings give an incomplete picture of the nonconformist legacy. On local councils and boards they could often get a majority of members and play a leading role in creating social services and civic pride. The ability of their representatives in public affairs owed a great deal to the democratic practices of their churches.

For Matthew Arnold nonconformists were the 'most vital part of English Philistinism'. Since he characterised the entire middle class as Philistines, it was almost a compliment, but it was not intended to be so; it signified indifference to the intellectual and artistic and a preoccupation with 'machinery'. There is no evidence that nonconformists were particularly culpable of this. Some of them were active in what Arnold would surely have regarded as helping culture, as he rather narrowly defined it, by producing good books at prices most readers could afford. Throughout the country there are art galleries named after wealthy nonconformists.

Arnold's conception of culture did not recognise that dissent had a modest but honourable cultural tradition of its own. The dissenting academies continued the interest in the natural sciences which had been growing during the Commonwealth but was stifled in the universities after the Restoration. The tradition was one of many influences leading to the foundation of the University of London and a transformation of higher education.

The first world war rudely quelled sectarian rivalries. They all soon realised that they were a squabbling minority and all rapidly losing adherents. They have had to fight together in a common cause. Increasingly they have learned to co-operate. A welcome sign of the ecumenical spirit now prevailing is that this good, well-written study is published by SPCK, once identified with High Church publications.

BRUCE PATTISON

MURDER OR MISADVENTURE?

The Porthole Murder Case. Denis Herbstein. Hodder & Stoughton. £17.95.

Like so many of the 'classic' murder cases, that of the lady and the deck steward has become a time-piece. Although enacted well within living memory, it breathes of a vanished world — the leisurely, pre-aerial jumbo jet era of oceanic leviathans, the romantic days of the big liners. For the lawyer, too, it evokes nostalgically the 'good old days' before, in 1971, the Beeching axe bit fatally through the centuries-old roots of the Assizes, when, as well as the trumpets, heroic pageantry and panoply greeted the red judge; when each of the sixty-one towns had its hotel elect, with an enormous cellar of maturing wine; when the conviviality of mess dinners and Grand Nights made a nonsense of the grey, latterday expedient of the late afternoon train back to chambers. Mr. Herbstein's book fondly conjures up these lost legal empires. Such peripheral pleasures aside, does the sad tale of James Camb, the satyrical steward, and Eileen Isabella Ronnie 'Gay' Gibson, the seductive show-girl, merit another telling forty years on? Geoffrey Clark's *Notable British Trials* volume of 1949, and the American paperback, *The Girl in the Stateroom*, by Charles Boswell and Lewis Thompson (1951), apart, this is the first full-length study of the case, and there is no question as to its value.

Setting the facts — and surmises — against a less Victorian, more enlightened, and simply better informed, background, it throws persuasive cross-illumination

into the eye of posterity. Time, too, being on his side, the author is able to provide us with significant, as well as interesting, aftermath information. By a fortunate accident of circumstance, Camb's death sentence was, for political reasons, commuted. Sydney Silverman's proposed amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill to suspend hanging for a trial period of five years was adopted in a free vote of the House, and the Home Secretary, Chuter Ede, had a plain duty to stay capital sentences at this experimental juncture.

After his emergence from prison in 1959, this ill-disciplined Lothario was twice keelhauled in regard to charges of indecent behaviour against children; the last when he was head waiter at the Waverley Castle Hotel, at Melrose, in Roxburghshire. 'Hair streaked with grey, dressed in waiter's striped trousers and black jacket, he was a pathetic sight in the dock.' Back he went to Wakefield prison for another three years.

Released in 1978, a seedy, grey, shrivelled, crusty old man, afflicted with heart trouble of the physiological variety, he died, aged sixty-two, the following year.

The riddle remains: did they on that July afternoon after Camb's cremation scatter the ashes of a murderer over the rose-garden in Rochdale? Mr. Herbstein's book puts again the seminal question: did Gay Gibson die of natural causes as the result of pressures put upon an already diseased constitution by overly exciting sexual intercourse when Camb paid his secret night visit to her in Cabin 126? Or did, as the jury decided, Camb strangle her? Was the girl dead when he slid her body through the porthole into the shark-infested tropical sea?

The author supplies the material for the possible formulation of some more solidly grounded answers than have hitherto been possible. Not only has he conducted wide-ranging interviews and exemplary 'field work', but he has even discovered, and borne off in great triumph, the actual log of the voyage of the *Durban Castle* (the locus vessel), which he found nestling in the Pandoran box of our mutual friend, the amazing Dr. Camille Wolff. This is no mere cuttings book amalgam of other folks' scissor-and-pasted reflections. It is a fascinating, well put together, nicely written 'role model' of how to go about putting an old case under the modern microscope in a meaningful way.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON-EGAN

SHORTER REVIEW

In Juniper Hall, an English refugee from the French Revolution (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £18.95), Linda Kelly recaptures the troubled but sparkling world of the French exiles. They had many adventures to recount, and their letters reflect intense emotions. This is a piece of careful research, delightfully told.

After the storming of the Tuileries by the Paris mob in 1792, Juniper Hall near Mickleham in Surrey became the refuge for a group of French liberal *aristos* who had managed to escape the guillotine. Among them were the formidable Mme. de Staël, her lover the Count of Narbonne, a former Minister for War, Talleyrand the cynic and renegade, who would prove more adept at surviving than any of them, and General Alexandre D'Arblay. Staying in Mickleham with her sister, Susanne Phillips, was the novelist Fanny Burney, who was fascinated by the exiles, and particularly by General D'Arblay, whom she fell in love with and married.

E.W.

Contemporary Review

125th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

OCTOBER 1991

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Contents *Page*

Historical Reflections on the Revolution in Russia — Richard Mullen — 169

Britain and the Euro-Blancmange — Austin Mitchell, M.P. — 174

Has the Poll Tax Killed British Local Government? — Howard Davies — 179

Prime Minister Rao of India — A. S. Raman — 183

The Nature of Regional Conflict: A Review of 1990 — Part Four: Conflicts in the Regions of the Superpowers — Stephen Chan and Jonathan Alner — 190

Academic Silver Anniversary: Personal Impressions of University since 1966 — A. D. Harvey — 196

Poems: Ask Not / Crusoe's Island — Alamgir Hashmi — 205

The Commonwealth and the Suez Crisis of 1956 — Sarah Newman — 207

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

Quarterly Fiction Review — Betty Abel — 213

Non-Fiction Reviews — 216

Esmond Wright, John Biffen, M.P., James Munson, Leo Muray, Bruce Pattison, A. D. Harvey, James Morton.

Shorter Reviews — 224

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HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

by Richard Mullen

ONE Thursday late in February, 1917 Maurice Paléologue sat reading in the French Embassy in Petrograd. He was trying to distract himself from worries about the War on the Western Front and about the deteriorating position of his Russian ally. He was looking through the correspondence of an early nineteenth century Russian philosopher. He found one remark from 1840 so interesting that he hastened to copy it into his diary: 'The Russians are one of those nations which seem to exist only to give humanity terrible lessons. Of a certainty these lessons will not be wasted. But who can foretell the sufferings and trials in store for Russia before she returns to the normal course of her destiny and her place in the bosom of humanity'. The day after the Ambassador copied these words, he entertained several members of the Imperial family to dinner. In the drawing room he asked Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna, the best informed of the Romanovs, what she thought of the outbreak of revolt that very day in the capital. 'I am expecting the most dire catastrophes. And yet God can't mean Russia to perish.'

In the last days of August, we suddenly saw a Russia gloriously return to 'her place in the bosom of humanity'. In the space of a few hours the bravery of a few thousand Russians stamped out the most extensive and most brutal tyranny ever known. For many people, both in Russia and beyond, this was a totally unexpected event. Yet for anyone who understood history, it should not have been. One of the near fatal mistakes of the twentieth century has been a tendency to seek guidance in the jargon of sociology rather than the wisdom of history. History clearly shows there are certain trends that great revolutions have in common. One of the clearest trends is that a world-shattering revolution in a great country almost always happens not when the situation of that country and its people is at its worst but precisely when things are getting better. In smaller revolutions, such as the recent one in Romania, it is possible for people to revolt out of desperation, for death seems no worse than life. Yet those revolutions that shake the world, whether in France in 1789 or Russia in 1917 or now in 1991 occur when there are signs of hope. The people or rather the intellectuals and those led by them look out and see some glimmering of hope. This small ray of improvement causes them to ask

why they should not have more. The taste of freedom arouses an appetite for a full meal. France in 1789 and Russia in 1917 were beginning to experience an elected parliament for the first time, but these bodies could not satisfy the craving for liberty and prosperity. Nor could they disguise the bankruptcy, both financial and moral, of what Marxists like to call 'the ruling class'.

Here again the faithful student of history could have seen the development of another familiar symptom of the approaching Revolution in Russia. Those who take their view of revolution from Dickens or Hollywood assume that sneering aristocrats oppose revolution with brave but foolhardy obstinacy. This is fine in a novel or in a film. In reality one of the surest signs of the approaching collapse of any authoritarian regime is when the pampered elite, whether in chateaux or in dachas, lose faith in the system that has allowed them to recline in luxury. The Marquis de Lafayette was only the most prominent of the hundreds of French aristocrats who hailed the fall of the Bastille as the dawn of a new age. Even before Czar Nicholas II had abdicated, his cousin, Grand Duke Cyril (son of Grand Duchess Marie Pavolvna), led a march of marines to the building where the Russian parliament was sitting to hail the overthrow of autocracy. The sudden conversion of many of the Communist elite at Boris Yeltsin's 'White House' has many historical ancestors. The conversions, at least in most cases, are not solely caused by hypocrisy or the need to save one's skin or dacha. The elite, including many high-ranking officers, knew even better than the poor what has caused the bankruptcy of a system. Many had come to the realisation that Edward Shevardnadze had discovered; 'Everything is rotten. It has to be changed'. Once the officers lose faith, the soldiers lose heart.

The soldiers had been losing heart in the Soviet system. According to figures in the magazine *Kuranty*, 120,000 Soviet soldiers have died in the last fifteen years. These figures do not include casualties from the debacle in Afghanistan. Even more shocking is the fact that half of these deaths were the result of suicide and another fifth were murders. Misery has also been sapping the morale of the officers. According to *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the army newspaper, over 10,000 officers' families were searching for housing in Moscow alone. The situation increasingly resembled the last days of Czarism when officers and men saw a brave army losing a desperate war because of incompetence and corruption.

A final historical warning was present in August, 1991. The last shred of the curtain veiling the incompetence of the ruler is torn away by plotters from inside the inner circle. Louis XVI was undermined by his cousin, the Duke of Orleans, as Nicholas II was by a desperate group of his relatives gathered round our old friend, Marie Pavlovna. Titanic revolutions are made not against monsters like Ivan the Terrible, Hitler or Stalin but rather against well-meaning but indecisive Hamlets like Louis XVI, Nicholas II and Mikhail Gorbachev. This is difficult for most observers outside Russia to see. For years the West has been so besotted by 'Gorby-mania' that it often failed to see that the last General Secretary

of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not embark on a series of reforms for purely altruistic reasons. He had seen that the Soviet Union could no longer afford to strut about the world as a superpower while its people queued for hours for the privilege to search barren shelves for any item of food. He knew that the shelves, like the system that had failed to stock them, were bare. His goal was to re-stock the shelves and the system. When he could do neither, his people saw that the time had come to push him aside. The road to revolution is always littered with the well-intentioned.

This August Revolution followed another precedent. Every successful revolution needs martyrs who can symbolise redemption through death and suffering. This is a tradition the Russian revolutionaries of all types have acquired from those well-trained masters of revolution, the French. Even the relatively sedate American Revolution magnified a street riot into the 'Boston Massacre'. Nothing is more dangerous for a bankrupt autocracy than spilling a little blood. It is possible to put down a revolution with massive killing as the gerontocracy in Peking proved. It is also possible to avoid turning a demonstration into a revolution if a government avoids bloodshed. But a small amount of blood can cause a great revolution.

When the world heard that a coup of eight hard-liners had arrested Gorbachev, Western leaders could not make the instant comments that the modern media demands. President Mitterand and Chancellor Kohl dithered. President Bush and John Major were cautious, but critical. It was Margaret Thatcher, alone of prominent Western politicians, who instantly and characteristically saw what must be done: the Russian people must take to the streets. Like Edmund Burke during the French Revolution or Winston Churchill during the Bolshevik one, she saw that the junta must be 'strangled in its cradle'. When Gorbachev returned to Moscow, he was returning to a city that had changed completely. Understandably dazed, reliant for the BBC World Service for most of his information and worried about his wife's health, he could not realise what had happened. One is reminded of the story of the Duc de Liancourt hurrying to Versailles to tell Louis XVI about the Bastille. 'Is it a revolt?' asked the King. 'No, sire, it is a revolution.'

For what one hopes was the last time, the intelligentsia of the West — with several honourable exceptions — looked at Russia during the week of 19 August with incomprehension and then pronounced with absurdity. Since the moment when Lenin popped up in Petrograd, most Western intellectuals have had one consistent trait: they cannot see Russian reality. Mikhail Gorbachev is a well-meaning man who brought some political reform to his people and allowed other nations to shake off the shackles of communist tyranny. Surely his own people could not turn against the man who was idolised in the salons of Hampstead and Georgetown. Once again we can see these people were in a long line of blinkered souls ranging from the wealthy American journalist, John Reed, who hailed the 'ten days that shook the world' in 1917 or the Anglo-Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw, who found it profitable to titilate his

middle class readers with his admiration for Bolshevism, or that most turgid of historians, E. H. Carr, who produced volume after volume to justify Lenin, his heirs and all their wicked deeds. (Thankfully these endless volumes are now as useful as an old calendar.) There were even those like the epicine art critic and traitor, Anthony Blunt, who could tear himself away from bickering about the provinence of a Poussin to dabble in a little thrilling espionage for the worker's paradise.

While all these Western experts babbled away, the Russian people were suffering the darkest and longest night of the soul even in their unhappy history. They knew that Ronald Reagan's simplistic and undiplomatic reference to 'the evil Empire' was an accurate one. They knew that the reports issued by bodies like Keston College about the war against religion, however dismissed by many church leaders in the West, were true. All the fifteen republics knew it to be an 'Empire' and millions who had heard the midnight knock on doors knew it to be 'evil'. Throughout this misery many of them were sustained by a deep though hidden spirituality. We were occasionally told that old peasant women could be seen in Orthodox churches. Yet as religion was declining in the West it was reviving in the East. In 1978 on the day Pope John Paul II was elected, I happened to visit Nicholas Zernov, the great Russian scholar who brought the traditions of his Church to Britain and sought with his wife to bring Christians together. The old man repeated over and over again, 'Imagine a Slav Pope, a Slav Pope!' He saw that this would have a profound effect not only on the Poles and the Czechs but on those farther east. The photographs of Orthodox clergy blessing those who defended Yeltsin's parliament and the sight of the simple wooden cross triumphing over the discredited hammer and sickle vindicates Dr. Zernov's faith. As Simon Vickers said in his article in last month's *Contemporary Review* describing his bicycle trip across Russia, the culture of that vast land was created by the Russian Orthodox Church. Russia will need its native spirituality as well as Western money and 'know-how' to recover from its prolonged catastrophe. A great deal of Russia's future will be decided by the Russian church: will they retreat into the old obscurantist vision of 'Holy Russia' or will they carry on their alliance with the new Russia that Boris Yeltsin has come to symbolise and provide leadership.

Revolution has been followed by dissolution and secession. Not since the first weeks of 1861 has the world seen such a spate of secession. Whether the emergent Soviet republics will be more successful in the 1990s than the embattled Southern states of America in the 1860s, time alone will tell. Yet as Gorbachev told the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that gathered in Moscow in mid-September, his country had gone through a 'purifying thunder storm'. The Soviet Union, he declared, 'has stopped being an antagonist in the world'. Any cynical delegates — perhaps including the now independent Baltic trio — might have thought that it would have been more accurate to say: the Soviet Union has come to an end.

The lugubrious octet who carried out — one can hardly say planned — the

coup against Gorbachev were the perfect symbols of 'Soviet Man'. They were the embodiment of the system that their desperate act destroyed. Looking at them in their sombre suits, gloomy faces, and shaking hands one was reminded of the recent book by the great Russian poet, Irina Ratischinkaya: *Grey is the Colour of Hope*. And so it proved. Perhaps in time, a free Russia will even put up a statue to their eight liberators. There are many empty plinths.

A Revolution succeeds, at least in the short term, when it topples symbols whether they be Bastilles in Paris or statues in Moscow. Cities and villages return to their old names casting off the hated honour of bearing the name of some sordid tyrant. Towns like Andropov become Rybinsk and Brezhnev returns to Naberezhnye Chelny. And, as of the first of this month, St. Petersburg is no longer disgraced by the name of Leningrad. As the hollow statues of Lenin float ludicrously in the air and smash in fragments on the ground, the hollowness of what he believed and the evil of what he created is revealed with a startling crash. In 1848, Karl Marx who dreamt up the idea proclaimed: 'A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of communism'. Whatever else will happen one thing is certain: that spectre, its creator, and its exponents are gone. As the graffiti scribbled on Marx's statue in Moscow proclaims: 'Goodbye Charlie'.

The November number of *Contemporary Review* will include: *Maastricht is the Question* by Leo Murray, *The End of Nation States?* by Nigel M. Healey and *Hong Kong: Paying the Price for Britain's Mistakes* by Paul Mackintosh.

BRITAIN AND THE EURO-BLANCMANGE

by Austin Mitchell, M.P.

COMMON Market negotiations have more in common with wrestling a multilingual blancmange than rational decision making. Yet Britain faces a peculiar difficulty with the process. As the blancmange is rolled towards Maastricht we are more in danger of being engulfed and absorbed by it than any other country. We are also less able to make a useful contribution to the process of political, monetary, or economic Euro-blancmange-building.

Others can, and will, because they pursue some perceived national interest and have some Euro-ideal. France wants to weld its partner Germany in and to get some control over the Bundesbank. Mediterranean countries want struc.ures which will subsidise them and compensate for their own governmental failures. Benelux countries want a greater say. Germany wants to assuage its guilt complexes and advance its dominance and industrial power. Britain alone negotiates defensively. We do not pursue national interests because we have no idea what they are. We do not permeate the machine because we don't take it seriously. We are not concerned with goals but with damage limitation. All this happens because our politics cope so badly with European issues. Our leaders seem to think they are playing cricket with everyone else playing rugby. While others sit back and think of Europe our focus of attention is always domestic, an ignorocentric approach which will cost us as dearly now, as it has in the past.

Ignoring any simple concentration on the national interest, like withdrawal, Britain's case in this year's Eurothon could be pursued by one of two broad alternative strategies. We could recognise that both the nation state and national economics have failed here in a unique way relegating the UK to peripheral decline in a competitive open market which compounds trends and focusses development on the centres of population and wealth. So we need redistributive structures which will compensate failure, build a community strong enough to help, rather than harm, and a *Europe des regions* which can give us a democratic influence we no longer have through economic strength.

Alternatively we could block progress until the unfinished business of two decades is dealt with by eliminating the disruptive effects of the CAP on our trade with agricultural producers, on the Uraguay round and on British cost structures through drastic reform and repatriation. We need a budget which supports us instead of levying us £2.4 billion and rising. We need looser — less intrusive arrangements. An association which is deeper and stronger is also more exclusive because it erects barriers to the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe and our EFTA friends. A looser arrangement of nation states, in which all can pursue their own interests while co-operating for common purposes, is better for our interests and their entry.

Pursued with a clear head and determination, either of these strategies is both beneficial and feasible. Certainly either is better for us than that deal between the industrial interests of Germany, and France's desire for agricultural protection which still dominates today. Neither side of it suits a declining industrial power with top heavy financial and service sectors which need a wider base. Yet alternatives imply choice. We cannot make any. To secure either we would have to be tough, determined, and ready to use every weapon even the veto, to get our way. We are none of these things: we have no strategy of building alliances. We have never attempted to interpose ourselves between France and Germany. We are beaten before we start because we're not playing the Euro-game.

Instead we drag, nagging, in the rear, generating maximum ill will for minimum achievement and we react rather than plan ahead. We have no clear idea of what kind of Europe we want, no positive programme to push for, still less to avow openly at home. The British constitution, our institutions and our politicians are all incapable of dealing with European issues. So John Major goes naked, and dithering, into the Euro-Chamber, constantly looking over his shoulder and seeking escape clauses, evasions and presentational formulae, never anything of substance. The national interest is never voiced and the only positive outcome will be in PR terms. Whatever structures Europe gets, our concern is electoral bamboozlement, not European reality.

That confusion is implicit in the terms of our relationship. Britain was neither led nor persuaded into the Common Market but lumbered in by the backdoor. For Harold Wilson it was an issue to be played with. For Ted Heath a crusade. He was ready to enter on almost any terms and postpone almost any problems. That deal turned sour in the light of experience. A trade surplus of £4 billion at today's prices in 1970 has become a deficit of £15 billion, a turn-round which means the export of a million jobs. A food bill of £17 a week is required for every family of four to support the CAP. The single market threatens to heighten the damage because competitors are more powerful while we prepare by cutting investment and industrial GBH. Nine-tenths of our trade deficit is with an EEC which was supposed to boost the economy.

Having hyped up the prospect, Euro-enthusiasts have been forced by this reality to fiddle the figures and Goebellise reality. The Vicar of Lilley prophesized that the world would end in 1697. When taxed by indignant parishioners with the fact that 1698 had come he replied that the world had ended but no one had noticed. Just so with the EEC. Damage is discounted, gains hyped, figures fiddled and a whole range of new vested interests has established round membership from agriculture and importers to Commission propagandists, all dedicated to convincing a bemused electorate that loss is gain, damage is benefit, and an agricultural protection society, a venture in international idealism.

Meanwhile what could still have been a serious debate degenerated into a row between Euro-phobics and Euro-philiacs which left reasonable men bemused. Critics carped but had no answer short of a withdrawal widely

deemed impossible. Ministers double-talked, blaming failures on the EEC while taking credit for successes. On a series of issues from fishing to VAT, ministers went to battle in Brussels breathing defiance and came back pleading that they had been over-ruled by an intransigent majority and didn't want to endanger membership.

Ministers were never ready to widen the circles of involvement and decision-making by involving Parliament as anything more than a rubber stamp. So MPs were kept in ignorance and treated like sheep. Battle was joined over symbols like sovereignty, metaphors like trains leaving stations or silly issues like the flavour of crisps, the noise of lawn mowers or the role of the Queen and her coins, not over the national interest and how that could be protected, or even discerned.

The British are a divided nation, so divisions dominated the discussion. The middle class regarded workers and unions as insular and reactionary, the media became a biased chorus of irrational evangelism on the issue. Those who were doubtful closed, liquidated or slunk silently into the night without knowing what had hit them. Finance was supportive because the City wanted to be the financial centre for Europe. Industry was more doubtful because it was hit. Yet the CBI kept it in line and it and the Institute of Directors dissillusionment dawned only slowly. Among the Civil Service it never really did.

Meanwhile the British economy was colonised and changed. If Britain has a future in Europe it must be as a base to export from rather than a market to be supplied. Only the Japanese transplants, brought in as a Trojan Horse from Europe, saw it that way and they were few in number. Native firms were battered or taken over. Britain was Europe's most open takeover market. British firms were taken over to be used for distribution of goods supplied from Europe and European money poured in to establish bases and networks, all weakening the ability to produce here. British capital, facing a block on takeovers in Europe, poured out to America and elsewhere.

The damage was then compounded by shackling the economy to Europe, sterling to the deutschmark and making German economic phases prevail over ours. By the late seventies and eighties Europe could move forward only crabwise by monetary 'snakes' in the hope that monetary union would lead to economic convergence. The results were unhappy. The Common Market became the low growth, high unemployment, blackspot of the advanced industrial world. Britain suffered a long war of attrition. Financial interests who saw their future in transferring weight out of a British economy too fragile to provide an effective base to become Europe's Financial Sector agitated for ERM membership. There was no certainty, until Nigel Lawson began to shadow the deutschmark with consequences the Conservative party now sees as disastrous. Nevertheless, poor, diffident, Mrs. Thatcher was bullied in. Entry at too high a rate nailed the lid down on depression. Just as Churchill's return to gold in 1925 ensured the industrial failures of the late twenties.

Margaret Thatcher disliked both the way the EEC was moving and its

socialist President, Delors, but was persuaded, nonetheless, to pass the Single European Act surrendering Britain's veto in several areas concerned with her beloved Single Market. Yet even that emerged as a disappointment. It failed to open up European insurance, banking and financial service markets to Britain in the same way that our industrial market had been opened to their manufacturers. It provoked a long term prospect that Britain would be peripheralised as multi-nationals began to close national plants to concentrate production on Superplants supplying the whole market from locations near the centres of population and wealth. Concentration has hollowed out the central United States in Europe it threatens the periphery.

Thus the British background to this year's negotiations is one of economic failure, general disorientation and a growing realisation that something is wrong, even if no one is clear what. The public is merely confused. Through the seventies and early eighties the best continuous guide to opinion, Gallup's question or 'approval' of Britain's membership showed a majority, usually over half, disapproving, a minority, usually around a third, approving, with a fifth (rising) as 'don't knows'. In 1988, concurrently with the collapse of faith in Mrs. Thatcher, approval suddenly rose to over sixty per cent, disapproval fell below 'don't knows'. So the public seems confused, its opinions neither strong nor salient. It could be led. Yet since it gets neither leadership nor explanation it dithers, providing no guide to action.

The parties have been even more mercurial. The issue was not important to Margaret Thatcher though she began to find Euro-fudge infuriating and beat the table about 'juste retour' but always ultimately accepted EEC decisions often to regret it afterwards. She was increasingly out of tune both with the EEC and with the Euro-majority in Cabinet and the Parliamentary Party. She was becoming a Euro-leper. Most of her defeats and disasters were over the Common Market.

The party followed her, embarrassed but tolerant of her 'eccentricities' until she was killed with a Euro-Ice-Pick. That leaves John Major, the choice of the anti Europeans currently trying to conciliate both EEC partners and the Europeans in his party while giving away as little as possible. A third of his party is anti-European, a third pro, the rest malleable: a situation calculated to palsy a leadership never very vigorous. With an election looming he will postpone decisions, and avoid sharp edges and exposed positions which might produce rows. Putting party first means putting Europe second and the national interest well behind both.

Labour has changed even more. It began the eighties with a commitment to withdraw which was an embarrassment to the leadership and was never argued with any enthusiasm. Today those who voted with Heath for membership control policy. Neil Kinnock likes being liked in Europe; the party is anxious to jettison embarrassments, and the assumption is that if Mrs. Thatcher was opposed to it and the Tories split it must be a good thing. So vacuous opposition has been replaced by vacuous enthusiasm without any contact with public opinion in between or at either end.

Communataire enthusiasm is almost a new Clause 4(B), leaving a hard core of around forty anti-Europeans fit to be relegated to the Museum of Labour History, a passionately pro-group of up to a hundred and a majority conforming to the line, whatever it is.

With such a political background at home, John Major negotiates from weakness. He cannot give a lead in the negotiations. That would be to expose divisions. Nor can he refuse to accept any deal in order to deprive it of the validity of operating under the Treaty of Rome, or play the nationalist card, or even insist on British national interests. Any of that would provoke rows from Labour, Liberals who believe in 'My Market Right or Wrong' and his own Euro-fanatics. So his aim must be to postpone commitments to the Ides of Luxembourg so as not to air divisions before the election. He seeks deals, concessions, delays and obfuscations, not specific objectives. His aim is to come back proclaiming 'peace with fudge'.

That result would be satisfactory only politically and then only for the Tories. It would make no contribution to Europe's deliberations and do nothing about Britain's dilemma. The manufacturing base on which modern nationhood rests has shrunk to a fifth of GDP. It is incapable of doing its job of providing jobs, generating growth and paying the nation's way in the world. So the dilemma is rebuild or slump into Europe and sometime soon, we must choose.

Rebuilding means a degree of distance, control over interest and exchange rates, freedom to use the weapons of economic nation-building. For a period we would have to give up the attempt to play in a big league. We aren't strong enough to participate in it and must concentrate for a while on our own needs. On the other hand, subsiding means seeking a European social security office for ailing economies, accepting failure, and allowing our surplus population, skills, capital and our educated elite to drain away to the magnet of the wealthier centres. The semi-slum in the west will be behaving like the real one to the east.

We are incapable of making such a choice of national destinies. So we have no idea of what kind of Europe we want either. In the eighties we offered Europe stern lectures. In the nineties we are unlikely to be strong or clear headed enough even for that. We will offer a smile, though it's an uncertain one. Yet not to do more is a terrible waste of an opportunity while the Euro-blancmange lumbers on down its meandering road to God Knows What, to become the first blancmange ever reshaped by a committee.

[Austin Mitchell is Labour M.P. for Great Grimsby.]

HAS THE POLL TAX KILLED BRITISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

by Howard Davies

THE story of the community charge, or Poll Tax as it became almost universally known, is remarkable. What began as the avowed 'flagship' of Margaret Thatcher's third government ended as the torpedo which sank her prime ministerial career. John Major, her successor, took commendably little time to appreciate that the only workable solution was to give the charge as decent and quick a burial as possible. But the consequences rumble on. At the very earliest, the Poll Tax cannot be replaced until April 1993 and the problems of continuing to collect it over the intervening period will be immense. More importantly, the experience of introducing and abolishing the community charge has entered a question mark over the future of local government in Britain. The consequences of Poll Tax for local government were severe; the consequences of the cure for Poll Tax could be fatal.

Few people fully understood the system of domestic rates which the Poll Tax replaced. In theory, for a household, the rates were a tax based on the estimated rental value of the property. But they became a rather curious impost for a nation addicted, to a greater degree than any other than Australia, to individual home ownership. Almost 70% of British households now own their own home and more than two thirds of the remainder live in accommodation provided and owned by the local council or a housing association. The rents paid in such social housing bear no very close relationship to the market price. So the private rented sector provided the only benchmark for market rents. But private rented accommodation had by the 1970s all but disappeared in many parts of the country. Overall, fewer than 10% of the population paid rents to private landlords, and certainly there was almost no rental market in many of the homes on which the domestic rating system hit hardest: the suburban detached and semi-detached houses of the middle classes.

So the seeds of the destruction of the rating system had been sown long before Mrs. Thatcher made its abolition a campaign pledge in the 1979 Election. Indeed, it can be argued that an implicit decision to abandon the domestic rating system had been made by Mr. Callaghan's Labour Government. The rental values, such as they were, at the heart of the old rating system were to be revised every five years, to reflect changes in the relative prosperity of different areas. In Scotland this five year revision was statutory. In England and Wales revaluations were at the discretion of the Government of the day. The last full revaluation took place in 1973. In 1978 the Labour Government took the view that the changes in rental values which would be assessed by the Inland Revenue Valuation Office over the previous five years would be politically damaging. They would show that the 1970s had seen a significant shift of wealth-creating capacity, in particular from declining industrial areas in the North

to the outer London suburbs, where many marginal seats were located. So no revaluation took place in 1978, meaning that even when Mrs. Thatcher came to power, the rating system was already in an advanced state of decay. Householders could no longer see any clear relationship between the value of their property and the rates they were asked to pay.

Unfortunately, like many apparently fragile old ladies, the rating system took a long time a'dying. The first Government review to identify a viable alternative reached no very useful conclusion in 1981 and was abandoned. Then, in 1983 came another Scottish revaluation, which ignited political fires north of the border, hitting Conservative supporters in the lowlands hardest. But, as many English politicians were becoming reconciled to the idea that reformed rates might be the least dreadful local tax, once again the political imperative of abolishing and replacing the rating system asserted itself.

Mrs. Thatcher's second election victory saw another Ministerial group established with a remit to find an alternative to domestic rates, come what may. That team, led by Kenneth Baker and William Waldegrave, now Home Secretary and Health Secretary respectively, found the task no easier than their predecessors had done. Eventually, they produced a Green discussion paper 'Paying for Local Government' which recommended the introduction of a Poll Tax as a supplement to the rating system to run in parallel with it over a lengthy period, with abolition of the rates as the eventual, long term outcome. Many members of the Cabinet were horrified at this recommendation, which they believed to be electorally unsaleable and administratively impracticable. But Mrs. Thatcher seized on the idea with enthusiasm, and, though not without difficulty, forced it through the House of Commons in the euphoric year after her third election victory.

Unfortunately, for her as it turned out, the notion of running the Community Charge in parallel with domestic rates for a number of years proved to be quite infeasible and the Government was forced into rapid and comprehensive introduction of the charge as the only source of local taxation revenue — the rates on business property having been taken over by central Government.

From that point on, the fifth act of the Poll Tax tragedy gathered pace. The first year's charge proved considerably higher than the Government had forecast, partly through local government overspending, partly through miscalculation, and the public outcry was considerable. A head tax which looked plausible at £150 a head — the illustrative figure in the Green Paper — was electorally disastrous at £380, the actual amount. Although considerable sums were shovelled at the tax in an effort to reduce the headline figure, controversy refused to die away. What became known as the 'Duke and the dustman' argument (why should both pay the same?) ran and ran, and electoral anxieties on the part of Conservative MPs in marginal constituencies faced with dramatic increases in local tax bills was a very significant, perhaps decisive factor in Mrs. Thatcher's downfall.

It proved relatively easy for the new Prime Minister to generate a

consensus within the Conservative Party in favour of abolition of the charge, and of some form of property tax based loosely on capital values as the right replacement. But in the matter of local taxation, a general consensus is quite inadequate; the devil is in the detail. And no acceptable solution could be found, which did not result in politically unacceptable tax increases for a significant minority of householders, without a large increase in Government grant to local authorities. So a £4 billion grant increase was announced in the 1991 Budget, funded by a rise in the rate of Value Added Tax from 15 to 17.5%.

Because Community Charge had been included in the retail price index, this tax shift had no consequences for inflation and was therefore engineered with little short-term pain. But the consequences for the longer term could be very serious for the integrity of the whole local government system. For, at a stroke, the amount of money raised by local authorities themselves from their own taxation was cut by about a third. This, combined with the removal of rates on local businesses from council control in the previous year and the introduction of a range of benefits and rebates to cushion disadvantaged people from the full rigours of the Poll Tax, meant that the proportion of local revenue raised locally fell from 57% in 1989/90 (the last year of the old system) to only 14% in 1991/92.

This dramatic fall has two significant consequences, apart from increasing the burden on national taxation. First, the impact on local taxation of small increases in expenditure, over and above those envisaged by Government when grant levels are set, will have a dramatic impact on local tax rates. This is known as the 'gearing' effect. A council which, perhaps because teachers' pay grows more than Government grants to local authorities (not an unknown occurrence), increased its spending money by 1% more than allowed for in the grant settlement, would have to increase its local tax rate by 7%. And, to make matters worse, the new, more progressive system of council tax based on the capital value of properties, makes this increase fall more heavily on wealthier, and typically Conservative voting, local citizens than on others.

The second, longer term impact, will be to make local councils less directly accountable to their electors and shift the focus of their politicians towards the business of generating grant revenue from the central Government 'Grantsmanship' rather than prudent husbandry of locally raised revenues, will become the most important skill for Council leaders and their professional officers. The essential link between voting, taxing and spending has been attenuated to such a degree that some fear it no longer exists in any meaningful form.

The Government is not blind to these consequences of the unplanned changes to the local authority financial regime. But its solution does not seem to be to find additional sources of revenue for local authorities, rather it is to remove elements of expenditure from local budgets and put them fairly and squarely onto the Exchequer. So, already, a quick fire announcement has been made to the effect that the financing of sixth form colleges and other colleges of further education for students between 16 and 19

will be funded out of general taxation through a funding council, rather than through local authorities. Other changes and reductions to the role of local authorities will almost certainly follow. It is widely forecast that the fire service may be the next to find itself shifted in a central direction. There are rumours about the future of provincial police forces. The Government is promoting 'opting out' by grant maintained schools which in future will be funded not from their local council but from the Department of Education and Science in London.

All these changes have their defenders and can be justified — with some difficulty — in their own right. But these justifications have an *ex post facto* feel about them. Because it is clear that a significant shift in responsibility from local authorities to central Government, or perhaps more accurately to central Government-appointed bodies, is taking place as part of a damage limitation exercise to compensate for the failure of the Community Charge to gain general acceptance. Some argue that our whole Constitution has been constructed in this piecemeal, unplanned way. Others are concerned that a fragile balance of power has been disturbed.

Some in local government argue that Whitehall is attempting to compensate for a loss of functions and powers to the European Commission in Brussels by pulling up to itself local government responsibilities. Thus, they say, subsidiarity is working precisely in reverse, with Brussels taking from London and London taking from Town Hall and Shire Hall. This contention cannot be supported by any analysis but has a certain pleasing symmetry about it.

What seems clear is that a shift in constitutional responsibilities is underway without adequate debate and with little thought given to the long term implications. Ministers in Parliament are annexing to themselves power over detailed serious decisions at local level. In decades to come, 1991 may therefore seem to have been a decisive moment in our constitutional history.

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PRIME MINISTER RAO OF INDIA

by A. S. Raman

THIS year India, the world's largest democracy with 520 million voters, elected her tenth Parliament in two phases — in mid-May and mid-June. Unfortunately the electoral process received a severe jolt with the eruption of unprecedented violence. The ghastly murder of Rajiv Gandhi, the chief of the country's largest political party, the Congress (I), came as the macabre denouement. The post-poll scenario confirmed the forecasts made earlier in the media: a hung parliament comprising the Congress (I) with 227 members in a House of 511 emerging as the largest single party, followed by the two Opposition blocs — the Bharatiya Janata Party at the extreme right and the National Front-Leftist combine at the extreme left, both being irreconcilably too far apart to make their presence felt. Naturally, it became clear that the Congress (I) would not only form a minority government but could look forward to a long enough innings in office, not because of its strengths but because of the weaknesses of the two Opposition groups which would rather work against each other than against the ruling party. So the Congress (I) was confident that it would return to power after an interregnum of 18 months resulting in a total mess created by the National Front Government, followed by the Samajwadi Janata Government — the first for eleven months under V. P. Singh and the second for seven months under Chandra Shekhar.

There was however one snag. The Congress (I), now with Rajiv Gandhi gone, was headless. The next man, whoever he was, was invisible. Any member was considered as good as any other since none of them was outstanding. So a struggle for succession seemed inevitable. But happily things gradually sorted themselves out, thanks to the unseen, behind the scene role played by Rajiv's Italian-born widow, Sonia. The new leader, thrown up by her approving nod, was acceptable to all — including the Opposition parties. The choice fell on P. V. Narasimha Rao, a gentleman politician from Andhra Pradesh, one of the five largest states in the country. Though in politics for more than five decades, Rao has neither foes nor friends and provokes no sharp reactions. In fact he had been number two in the cabinets of both Indira Gandhi and her son. But he made no impact on the political scene, because of his quiet, sedate, inconspicuous style of functioning. He has the reputation of being the sacred cow of Indian politics.

Thus, for the first time since Independence, India opted for a Prime Minister from the south. Whether Rao is the right man for the right job or not remains to be seen. The feeling in political circles is that he lacks the will, if not the ability to project an image of himself as a strong, self-sufficient and self-respecting leader in his own right. With his total commitment to the discredited policies of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, can he take bold and imaginative decisions? Under pressure from the IMF, by initiating radical economic reforms, he has dismantled the socialist

castles built in the air by Jawaharlal Nehru. But still, Rao claims that whatever he has done, he has done only to give substance to Nehru's dreams. Anyway, Rao won the first round on July 15 when the confidence vote was carried by 241 votes against 111 with 112 abstentions.

What India needs at the moment is, not change of governments, but change of ideas — policies, priorities and perspectives. A government is to be judged not by what it says, but by what it does. The country has waited for 44 long, agonising years to get the Government it deserves. Will there ever be one? In this context, the warning given by *The Economist* has a pointed significance. It says in its issue of May 11: 'The world's largest democracy sets a wretched example: Its people are poor, its politics venal and its potential wasted. In Asia's race to develop, India is a clumsy laggard — advancing, to be sure, but with an exasperating lack of vigour for a country so blessed with vigorous people. Life expectancy is less than China's; the infant mortality rate twice that of the Philippines; the literacy rate is half Sri Lanka's. The list of failings is long. The half a billion Indians preparing to vote in this month's election have reason to be dissatisfied. And outsiders have reason to worry'. The scenario is no doubt grim. But every cloud has a silver lining and in the present context the rise of Rao to the Prime Ministership is the most positive, auspicious and reassuring development. Here we have a perfect gentleman who seeks to inject new decencies and values into public life and, being a product of exposure to that great ascetic turned political activist, Swami Ramananda Tirtha, in his formative years, Rao can be expected to do nothing wrong or improper. In fact he is a misfit in the sort of buccaneer politics the post-Independence Congress practises. The very fact that he has stayed gloriously afloat for so long in this cesspool testifies tellingly to his intrinsic durability — to the quality of the values he cherishes.

In the post-poll circumstances, he was apparently the obvious choice because of his seniority in the party as well as his towering stature — though physically he is a midget — as statesman, administrator, freedom fighter, scholar, Gandhian and, above all, as the man for all seasons. The secret of his staying power in the sordid, stinking power politics of the post-Independence years lies, not in his opportunistic adaptability and pliancy, but in his humility, integrity, sweet reasonableness, steadfastness and congenital incapacity to hurt any one, however grave the provocation. His friends say that he never helps them. His enemies say that he never hurts them. They expect to be hurt, however gently, so that they have a chance of strengthening their defences. But he would not oblige them. They may consider him their enemy. But to him they are neither friends nor foes. He is much too serious and magnanimous to think in terms of hurts and counter-hurts. The Andhras are proud that the first Prime Minister from the south is one among them. In the past Andhra Pradesh had contributed three Presidents: Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, V. V. Giri and N Sanjeeva Reddy. Rao is too modest, mild-mannered and morally uncompromising to take any wrong political decision even if the expediency demands it. He has the unique distinction of remaining a fiercely loyal

Congressman, ever since he joined the party five decades ago. For example, he declined the Deputy Prime Ministership when, in 1977, the Janata Party, then in power, offered it to him. He never projects himself. But he is always ready to take on any challenge on his own terms in the larger interests of the country. He has the natural urge to remain disconcertingly private, unconcerned and withdrawn in the midst of the heat and dust of power politics. He has mastered the difficult art of remaining a Yogi in the company of Commissars.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's choice of Narasimha Rao as successor to K. Brahmananda Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, after the 1971 State elections confounded the political pundits who did not know how to react to what had happened — it was so stunning. Earlier, everybody thought Rao might have to go into the wilderness because of his intense anti-separatist activities. Thus what seemed to be his biggest liability turned out to be his biggest asset. Not that the Prime Minister's nominee was a total nonentity. He had been holding positions and portfolios of little consequence in various State cabinets since 1962 — handling such lacklustre, low profile departments as education, health, information, religious endowments, archaeology, etc. But, being a member of the politically under-privileged Brahmin community, he had never been taken seriously by his swaggering Reddy colleagues who had reduced the State to a feudal fiefdom.

What were the factors that influenced Mrs. Gandhi to favour a little known political lightweight? Possibly, she had been looking for someone with a politically correct and administrative clean record, incapable of stirring up violent feelings in the masses either for or against him. In other words, an upright, impartial, non-controversial man, committed to the unity and stability of the State, but with no sharply etched public image of his own. Less than two years later, he had to step down as Chief Minister to make way for the President's Rule provoked by the disturbed conditions in the State. But the Prime Minister wouldn't deny herself the services of such a good and quietly competent man. Sensing instinctively his usefulness to her, because of his skills, talents and abilities, she shifted him to Delhi where he soon became General Secretary of the ruling party. Later, he held several key positions in her cabinet as well as in her son's. He was by turns Minister for External Affairs, Defence, Home and Human Resource Development. He has not looked back since.

Those who seek to understand Rao have necessarily to go beyond his sweet smiles and gracious gestures. He has no enemies, they say. He has no friends either in the sense that he has no favours to bestow on those who seek them without deserving them. His sense of right and wrong and his commitment to public accountability, compounded by his cold, clinical detachment, stand protectively between him and sycophants.

The initials *PV*, as Rao is popularly known, are by now familiar to every one in India. *P* stands for Pamulaparti, his ancestral home, about 50 miles from Hyderabad, and *V* is for Venkata or Victory, according to his admirers. On June 28, 1921, he was born in an affluent, land-owning

Niyogi Brahmin family. He had his early schooling at Warangal in Telangana, the former Nizam's territory. In the matriculation examination he stood first in the princely State. The village where he was born, Lakkinepalli, is about 20 miles from Warangal. But he claims Huzurabad in the Vangara taluk of the Karimnagar district as his ancestral home. That is why he is fond of contesting from the Manthena constituency in the Karimnagar district. Manthena, by the way, is the stronghold of the Brahmin community, being the traditional home of outstanding Vedic scholars. His father, a proud, patriotic and powerful local leader, was an official in the Nizam's service.

While studying, Rao found himself involved in the Vande Mataram agitation directed against the Nizam. Just a few days before the final examination, he, along with 600 other students, had to face rustication from the college. They all migrated to Nagpur where they completed the Intermediate course. There was one year's break in Rao's studies because he refused to apologise for his part in the Vande Mataram stir.

In 1941 he resumed studies at Poona's Fergusson College. He passed BSc with Physics and Mathematics securing a distinction and secretly nursed a desire to go to Cambridge. But there were two obstacles in the way: The War and his father's reluctance to send him abroad. The old man who died in 1944 was too orthodox and obscurantist to permit his children to cross the seas.

In 1942 Rao went back to Nagpur to do Law. But again he found himself drawn into the thick of politics. He took part in the 1942 Quit India movement. He went underground. The college authorities were generous enough to condone his absence for five months. Eventually, he took the LLB examination, passed in the First Class, standing first in the university, won a gold medal, declined the offer of judgeship and returned to Warangal.

He set up legal practice at Hyderabad as Burugula Ramakrishna Rao's junior. For five years he managed to concentrate on his professional work. But his heart was in the freedom struggle. So, again, in 1947-48, he took a plunge into agitational politics. The lawyers' strike of 1947 — September to October — severed him from his legal practice. Meanwhile the harassment by the Razakars — the Nizam's version of storm troopers — became more and more unpleasant threatening the welfare of his family. But he remained unperturbed.

At Chanda he organized a State Congress Border Camp. He activated the agitation against the Nizam's rule in a big way but managed to escape arrest. He says: 'We were incognito. All the time we were only helping our chief, B. Ramakrishna Rao. How could the police arrest me? They had no evidence.' Rao's real mentor was a Sanyasi, Swami Ramananda Tirtha under whose austere tutelage he had his formal baptism in politics. Now we have the key to his political rectitude and the incorrigible fatalism and disinterestedness innate in his politics. This does not mean that Rao is a sort of secular Sanyasi. No, not at all. He is a shrewd politician who does not easily give in when engaged in a fight not of his choosing. He is

not typical of his native Telangana which is rugged and rocky but rich like an uncut diamond. Nor is he a typical Andhra from the coastal belt because of his genius for stooping to conquer. He has perfected the art of lying low adroitly to strike hard at the right moment. Hard, but not hard enough to hurt his victim. He is cool and calculating but not coarse and cunning. He can never make an emotional impact on the ebullient Andhra masses because he trusts his intellect rather than his impulse. His reluctance to overreact to situations and his polish, poise and perspicacity can never give him a mass base. That is why he loses elections. The criticism against him is that he has no political base. C. Rajagopalachari also had no political base. Naturally, the elder statesman decided to avoid the ignominy of contesting an election and losing it. In the Nehru-Gandhi era of Indian politics which ended with the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, Rao was aware that the scope for what he could do was limited because the source of his credibility and durability was, not the support of the masses, but his leader's faith in his ability to deliver the goods—whoever the leader was, Prime Minister or Party President. Apparently, Rao has no qualities of leadership vis-a-vis facile populism or power politics. Right from his student days, he has been a faithful follower rather than a forceful leader. But his political instincts are sound. He knows that ability, integrity and loyalty will in the long run take one very far in public life rather than fire and flamboyance. He feels he is closer to Rajagopalachari and Lal Bahadur Shastri in his mental and temperamental makeup than to Nehru, Indira Gandhi and her son, because of his sharp intellect at one extreme and tender humaneness and traditional lifestyle at the other. That is why he is so soft and self-effacing. He is in essence a mediaeval man trying to come to terms with the ethos of modernity. Of course he has his inner fury. He is a passive volcano. But he rarely erupts, as he did when Sharad Pawar, the other contender for the Prime Ministership, challenged him for a secret ballot.

Normally he is a quiet and silent man ready to carry out orders from above rather than issue them. Once I saw an embarrassing photograph hanging on the wall in the reception room when he was Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. It was a large picture showing him in an obsequious stoop beside the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi who was briefing him. His rapport with the central leadership was total, reducing Chief Ministership to feudal subservience which only isolated him from his own people. The joke about him was that he was the only Chief Minister in the Union Cabinet! His dependence on Delhi was an open scandal.

Did Rao ever have direct contact with Gandhi? No. But, as a student at Nagpur, he used to visit Sevagram and admire the Father of the Nation from a distance. Rao says: 'The split in the Congress at the Tripura Session brought me closer to Gandhi emotionally and I at once became his devotee'. Did Rao know Nehru well enough? 'No,' says the Prime Minister, 'I had no contact with him either, except as interpreter of his speeches. Even his daughter remains formal to me. I first came into contact with her as an interpreter of her speeches. By nature I prefer to keep aloof'.

This is what he said to me in 1972. Of course he has since moved very close to the Nehru-Gandhis. They respected him for his scholarship, statesmanship and uncanny understanding of the intricacies of realpolitik. He was in fact Chanakya to Rajiv's Chandragupta and earlier Mrs. Gandhi's one-man brainstrust.

Rao is a formidable master of languages. He knows Sanskrit, Telugu, Urdu, Hindi, English, Marathi, French, Spanish, Arabic and Persian. Telugu is his mother tongue and Urdu and English are the languages in which he received his formal education. The other languages he knows well enough, though he has taught himself these. In Hindi he is a Sahitya Ratnakara, a very high academic achievement. He has translated into Marathi the prestigious Gyanpeeth-award (the Indian equivalent of the Nobel Prize) winner, Viswanatha Satyanarayana's Telugu novel, *Ekaveera*. He has rendered a Marathi novel, *Abala*, by Harinarayan Apte into Telugu. He is famous for his Hindi version of Viswanatha Satyanarayana's monumental Telugu classic, *Veyipadagadu* (Thousand Hoods) under the title *Sahasraphan*. This work is more than 1,000 pages. Rao is very studious. He is, as Americans would say, a *readaholic*. He can be seen reading a bulky classic when he is not untying a political knot or formulating a new Punjab policy.

Rao's appointment as Prime Minister did not come as a surprise even to his worst enemies, if he has any, in the context of the country's grave economic crisis. India at the moment is on the brink of total bankruptcy — economic, political, moral, social and cultural. Her image has the lowest rating in the international community. Rao has been asked to save the situation and whether he succeeds or not will depend on the quality of his performance as well as on the sort of co-operation he receives from his own Party and the Opposition. However, he will not be able to command respect in the country unless he rises above the allurements of coterie culture which the Congress (I) has developed in recent years. He has to strengthen his public image by resisting the sinister spell of spurious godmen and gunmen who flock after an Indian politician the moment he comes to power. Rao is blessed with abundant commonsense, fortified by massive intellect and extensive experience. He can be trusted to take the country forward by giant leaps, provided Sonia Gandhi does not function as Prime Minister by proxy. Unfortunately, there are indications that she will, because of the ruling party's desperate dependence on the Nehru-Gandhi charisma for its own survival.

In the absence of the Sonia Gandhi factor, the Narasimha Rao Government will last the full five year term for three reasons: (i) The threat of another election following the fall of the Government, (ii) the big political and ideological divide between the two Opposition formations, and (iii) the Prime Minister's affable, non-controversial, consensus-seeking style of functioning. Will he live up to his reputation as a quiet, solid, unspectacular achiever? He will, provided he exorcises himself of the Nehru-Gandhi ghost and stops telling people that whatever he does, will have validity only if he can relate it to the dreams of the Nehru-Gandhis. The refrain

of his political sonata is: Move on to the land of Rajiv's dreams! This sounds hypocritical, because Rao and his colleagues at the moment are carrying out the orders of the international lending institutions which will not help India, unless she reverses the pseudo-socialist trend initiated by the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. How hollow Rao sounds when he says: 'We, on whom the mantle of fulfilling Rajiv Gandhi's dream has fallen, would certainly do our very best to complete that dream!'

Will Rao be only a stop-gap Prime Minister? Or will he last the full five year term? It all depends on what support he gets from Sonia Gandhi who has inherited the power and glory of her husband. Her frowns and smiles decide the fate of the Congress (I) leader. There is however one redeeming feature: her widely known reluctance to be drawn into politics. She strongly resented even her husband's entry into this dirty area in 1981 under pressure from his mother. But the Congress (I) has a powerful section favouring Sonia's political involvements in their own interests — frankly, for getting votes at the time of elections. The Nehru-Gandhi mystique still works as an electoral open sesame.

It is to be hoped that the Sonia lobby will place the interests of the country above those of the Party and allow the Rao Government to function smoothly according to its own assessments and perceptions. India at the moment needs a firm, clean, result-oriented government, committed to national stability, integrity and prosperity. The country, reeling under the crushing weight of a massive foreign debt amounting to US$70 billion, has been at the doorstep of every rich nation with a begging bowl in the hope of getting bailed out of the credit crunch. The serious economic challenges the Indians face today are the legacy of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty whose socialist concepts and methods resulted only in sterile over-bureaucratisation of every economic enterprise. Socialism as political philosophy is all right. But as economic policy, it doesn't work, as has been the experience of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, GDR and even China. The concepts of economic equality and social justice, enforced through State machinery, are against the basic creative urges and competitive spirit of man.

The Sonia lobby will be rendering great national service by assuring the Rao Government that it is free to function as best it can so that the country under the Prime Minister's stewardship cruises through the present crisis.

Rao is a widower. He lost his wife in 1970. Father of eight children, he is not an inspiration to family planners. Forced to live with his diabetes and heart condition, he is a sick man. He has already had one bypass operation. His hobbies are: computer games and music. He is a very good singer of classical Hindusthani music.

Rao is an extremely careful man. He would not overdo anything, nor would he fall short of what is expected of him.

[A. S. Raman is a former editor of the 111-year-old *Illustrated Weekly of India* of the Times of India Group.]

THE NATURE OF REGIONAL CONFLICT: A REVIEW OF 1990 — PART FOUR: CONFLICTS IN THE REGIONS OF THE SUPERPOWERS

by Stephen Chan and Jonathan Alner

EVEN if the superpowers withdraw or scale down their interest in all other regional disputes, it seems likely that they will seek some voice in their own regions. The US will continue its interest in Latin America, as the invasion of Panama demonstrated, and will take a keen interest in the futures of El Salvador and Nicaragua, where it has been actively involved in conflict against left-wing forces. By contrast, the Soviet Union is highly unlikely once again to intervene in Afghanistan, yet, in withdrawing from that country, has done its best to equip the government there with highly expensive means of survival. The true regions of consequence to the Soviet Union are formed by its own republics, now clamouring for forms of independence. Whereas the Baltic states may achieve some autonomy by means of hard bargaining and popular desire, the trans-Caucasian states are areas of ethnic and nationalist conflict where there is no unity of purpose for an independent future. Moscow cannot extricate itself from this conflict, and cannot satisfy any of the conflicting parties without inflaming others. Trans-Caucasia looks like being a drain on Moscow's resources and patience well into the 1990s and has wider regional implications in terms of Islamic fundamentalism and developmental backwardness. It is not likely, however, to disturb unduly the rapprochement between Moscow and Washington, so looks set to simmer on without any satisfactory solutions in sight.

Both superpowers behaved, in 1990, like regional powers rather than the superpowers of old. The drama of Panama has not been repeated by the US, yet the US must have gained immense satisfaction from the electoral defeat of the Sandanistas in Nicaragua. This defeat, however, probably signalled the end of Washington's view of the region in east-west terms. If ever a Sandanista government is returned in the future, it is doubtful it would be destabilised and threatened in the same way. The US remains the region's over-arching power and has regional interests, but these have become more purely regional, less ideological, and less opposed to Moscow. Even so, conflict continues in the region.

El Salvador and Nicaragua

El Salvador experienced continuing violent conflict throughout 1990. On the third day of January, 13 people were killed and killings went on throughout the year. By April, however, the FMLN rebels and the government met in Geneva to negotiate an end to the war. The meeting did not halt the violence and further talks had to be held in Caracas in May. Further killings marred June, and still further talks were held that month in Mexico. The cycle of violence alternated with talks in San Jose (Costa Rica) in July, in San Jose again in August, and in Mexico again

in October. What both sides sought was to be in the best positions possible once a ceasefire occurred. In addition, however, both sides were unprepared to renounce or see their aspirations and beliefs significantly diluted. The government wanted the FMLN accommodated within the status quo, but the FMLN wanted the dimunition of the government's army to the point where it no longer had any political capacity of its own, and sought also the political transformation of El Salvador. Its call of 25 September revealed, however, one promising feature.

This called for 'democratic revolution', which was to abolish both government and rebel armies — but this was probably a rhetorical gesture — and which was also to create a new constitution and economic order. In short, the rebels insisted on winning what they had fought for. The new government emerging from the 'democratic revolution' was, however, to seek reconciliation with the US. This gesture may suggest the increasing localisation of conflict, with Washington being invited to believe that its interest would not be under threat by a FMLN government, or an administration that included FMLN personnel. However, with FMLN advances in November, Washington continued to express its concern.

In Nicaragua, what was achieved after the February elections and the 25 April transfer of power was exactly the sort of coalition of interests which might be acceptable both to the region and the US. Mrs. Chamorro became president, but effectively repudiated the Contras — who had been the instrument of US policy — declaring that no government or army posts would be reserved for them. Instead, the Sandanista Defence Minister, Humberto Ortega and other Sandanista commanders retained authority over the armed forces. By June, the Contras had surrendered or agreed to disband, and the position of the Sandanistas in the armed forces confirmed by September.

In a way, it was a Sandanista coup within a non-Sandanista government. Both a political pluralism and a curious preservation of interests had been effected, with the Contras, having proved useful but expendable, the only real losers. By this curious arrangement, relative stability seems to have come to Nicaragua and the end of 1990 found the country still facing immense economic problems, but far more at peace with itself than for many years past.

This does not mean that the US will turn a blind eye to Nicaragua. Events elsewhere have meant less scrutiny than before, but the US ability to provide funds or not will mean that Nicaragua remains aware of Washington's regional agenda, but will now be able to greet it on a curious but surer footing than before.

Afghanistan

Conflict between the Soviet-supported Kabul government of Najibullah and the Mujaheddin continued in 1990. On the first day of 1990, 140 Mujaheddin died in an attack on Jalalabad, and that battle set the tone for the year to come, with Mujaheddin attacks — including a four-day attack on Kabul in the end of March and beginning of April — and the increasing confidence of the government that it could repulse them. All

year, the Mujaheddin took no major objectives but, instead, in May in the Paghman Mountains, and in July near Jalalabad, the government scored major victories against its guerrilla enemies.

No government action was as successful, however, as internecine strife with the Mujaheddin itself. In May and June, some 400 died as a result of rivalries in one camp alone. But the Mujaheddin were not alone in their disarray. In January, and again in March and April, Najibullah acted ruthlessly to crush coup attempts.

By June, however, it had become clear that no single faction could overthrow Najibullah, and, on 24 June, both the US and the Soviet Union agreed to accelerate efforts for a compromise solution. In July, the US Senate Intelligence Committee voted to cut US covert aid by a third, but this had no immediate effect on Mujaheddin capabilities. An October Mujaheddin attack on Kabul left 22 dead and 30 wounded. Even so, the Mujaheddin can only anticipate the gradual diminution of aid and arms, while the Najibullah Government, if it survives its own internal tensions, looks able to win a war of attrition. Against this background, the first tentative talks were held between the government and the Mujaheddin in November.

Trans-Caucasia

If conflict in Afghanistan has seemed at least understandable, that in Trans-Caucasia has always seemed inscrutable in the absence of a superpower conflict to define at least some of the issues. To an extent, the problems there reflect the transition within the Soviet Union as a whole. The idea of openness, however, has catalysed the expression of problems that could not have remained suppressed indefinitely. These are problems of nationalism, often at the most chauvinistic and fundamentalist level. Although there can be a religious dimension to conflict, the animation of conflict is not often religious. It is cultural and communal, made compulsive by a sense of economic deprivation, but it is a communalism expressed in the most basic and unsophisticated terms. It is a communalism derived from antiquity since modern economic and social development has not become successfully rooted in these territories.

Since there are a variety of Trans-Caucasian republics concerned, this means there are a variety of nationalisms and antique communalisms. The general problem is multiplied and compounded by various distinct expressions. Thus, Gorbachev's Government must deal with the distinctive demands of different republics and problems in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizia. Nor are they problems which can be dealt with within the existing framework of the Soviet Union. On 22 January 1990, the Azerbaijan Parliament threatened to secede from the Soviet Union; on 20 June, the Uzbekistan Parliament passed a 'Declaration of Sovereignty'; on 23 August, Armenia declared its independence; on 24 August, Tadzhikistan declared its sovereignty. Added to the Georgian declaration of independence on 20 June, the Ukrainian declaration of sovereignty on 16 July, and the determination of the Baltic states to achieve independence, Trans-Caucasia looks part of a trend, as indeed it is.

But the fact that none of the Trans-Caucasian republics could survive independence unaided substantially by Moscow suggest that the various 'independences' and 'sovereignties' thus far declared are the rhetorical expressions of needs which cannot be easily satisfied either within or without the Soviet Union.

The entire Trans-Caucasian region is one of conflict, both with Moscow and among competitive communal groups. The region's problems cannot be solved in the early years of the 1990s yet the region is unimportant to the US, which views it in any case as a particularly Soviet region. This means the secessionists have neither the means of autonomy nor any meaningful international support. All they have is Moscow as an enemy and scapegoat. This will be a continuing conflict as the decade progresses, and it opens onto the conflicts — quite separate at this stage — of South Asia. These conflicts are different and self-contained but, if geographically they are seen to become at least proximate, then the region of conflicts will have become enlarged.

In the chronologies that follow, we have concentrated on only the last three months of conflict in Afghanistan, El Salvador and Trans-Caucasia. The pattern established then, as in the entirety of 1990, has continued into 1991. Although the superpowers sought to condition, if not control, conflicts in their regions, their success was limited. In December 1990, the US and USSR anticipated a joint-declaration to end the conflict in Afghanistan which, in 1991, continues to be fought more and more as a war of attrition. In El Salvador, despite the declared willingness of the rebel FMLN to talk peace, and the US Government's pressure on San Salvador to take negotiations seriously, the conflict continued and reached several high points of intensity in 1991. The story in Trans-Caucasia is all too familiar to readers of the news in 1991. As in 1990, Gorbachev can neither crush nor accommodate the rebellious republics. They, in turn, cannot easily escape the Soviet Union. If they did, they could not exist materially without sustained co-operation with it. In the meantime, their pressures for autonomy or independence only weaken Gorbachev, as could be seen at the G-7 meeting in London this last July and in the attempted coup. Unable to control conflict in his own Union and its regions, he looks unable to influence conflict elsewhere except by the reduction of his support and Soviet disengagements.

El Salvador

17-18.10.90 FMLN launch attack on San Salvador on the nights of 17-18th. Army airbase at Ilpango, on outskirts of the capital hit, prompting US and USSR to attempt to bring about a negotiated settlement.
20.10.90 US Senate votes to withhold half of the Bush administration's proposed $85m military aid for 1991 until the government shows that it is seriously pursuing peace talks.
21.11.90 FMLN attack military positions in an attempt to unblock the peace process. 20 killed.
26.11.90 Death toll rises to 85 (300 wounded) in a week of FMLN attacks.
4.12.90 FMLN use Soviet-made SAMs against the airforce.
31.12.90 FMLN say they will end their six week offensive and are ready for peace talks.

Nicaragua

2.10.90 Rally by pro-Sandinistas against Chamorro's economic austerity measures

leads to riot police cordonning off the presidential palace.
4.10.90 At least nine killed in a battle between the police and former Contras in Waslala.
Right-wing rebels seize northern town of Waslala.
5.10.90 Sandinista Front decides to end its boycott of dialogue with Chamorro on the economic crisis.
13.10.90 Sandinista trade union organisation, FNT, walks out of talks with the government on economic policy.
29.10.90 Six-months non-strike pact agreed with the FNT.
7.11.90 Unrest amongst ex-Contras due to Chamorro's failure to deliver on promises of land and credit.
9.11.90 Three ex-Contras killed and 35 people wounded in rebel attack on police installations.
19.11.90 Former Contra leader arrested and plan discovered for the destabilization of the country resulting from only the partial fulfillment of disarmament promises.
22.11.90 Right-wing protests escalate in the north with calls for senior ministers to resign.
23.11.90 Chamorro pledges to withdraw troops to ease tension in the northern provinces.
5.12.90 Group of ministers visit Paris to seek $350m aid to support the economy.
22.12.90 Chamorro vetoes a proposal for cuts in army spending.

Afghanistan

2.10.90 22 killed in rocket attack by Mujaheddin on Kabul.
5.10.90 Hezbe Islami rebels claim to have captured the provincial capital Tarin Kot — one of their first big successes since the Soviet withdrawal.
13.10.90 Mujaheddin launch two-pronged attack on Kabul. Government troops use air force to hit back.
17.10.90 Mujaheddin close to capturing Qalat, capital of the southern province of Zabul. Its fall would place pressure on Najibullah to reach a settlement.
21.10.90 Mujaheddin reject a power-sharing proposal by Najibullah.
23.10.90 Afghan army repels a strong attack by Mujaheddin on Kabul.
7.11.90 Najibullah seeks increased Soviet aid as Mujaheddin launch a rocket attack on Kabul airport.
19.11.90 Najibullah flies to Geneva for peace talks with Muslim leaders.
22.11.90 Najibullah claims that talks laid foundations for progress towards peace.
24.11.90 Najibullah agrees to the setting up of a neutral transitional authority to supervise free elections.
26.11.90 Najibullah says, after returning from Geneva, that he would stop Soviet arms supplies and destroy all stockpiled weapons.
5.12.90 Najibullah claims he has 'reached an understanding' with rebel factions that may lead to a truce in the civil war.
10.12.90 US and USSR expected to announce a joint declaration on ending the conflict after foreign minister-level talks in Texas.

Trans-Caucasia

1.10.90 Soviet troops withdraw from Baku as voters take part in the first local elections since the Moscow crackdown.
1.10.90 Tens of thousands demonstrate across the Ukraine against the Communist Party and Moscow political control.
4.10.90 Armenia threatened with Kremlin-organised fuel blockade. Supply to industry already cut as population prepare for hardship.
15.10.90 Ukraine becomes the first republic to sign an international agreement without first consulting Moscow. (Accord on Polish-Ukrainian relations).
15.10.90 100,000 Ukrainian students march through Kiev demanding the resignation of the republic's communist government.
17.10.90 Poland and the Russian Federation sign an agreement on friendship and co-operation.
18.10.90 Ukrainian Prime Minister resigns.
26.10.90 Multi-party elections due in Georgia on 28.10.90.
Moldavia on the verge of civil war as Turkish minorities ignore threats of military action, going ahead with elections to ratify secession of their own areas.
27.10.90 Crackdown in Gagauz region of Moldavia — state of emergency declared

and the local government abolished.

28.10.90 Soviet troops sent to Moldavia to stop bloodshed between Romanians and Turks.
Principal opposition groups declare their desire for total independence from the USSR.
Free elections take place in Georgia. 1,900 candidates from 30 parties represented — the communists attract few votes.

1.11.90 Moldavian nationalists reported to have blocked border posts on the Soviet border with Romania to demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the south of the republic.

2.11.90 Moldavian troops clash with Russians and Ukrainians.
Zviad Gamsakhurdia, leader of the new electoral coalition in Georgia, said that he expected independence in less than five years.

7.11.90 Gorbachev may allow republics to quit the union.

11.11.90 Nationalists in Georgia win 155 out of 255 seats in multi-party elections in the second round of voting.

23.11.90 Gorbachev proposes to make the country into a 'union of sovereign states'.

4.12.90 Republics which do not sign the new Treaty of Union will be seen as subject to the old treaty and not as having seceded.

10.12.90 Georgia's communist party splits from Moscow, following the lead of the Baltic states, and commits itself to working towards the restoration of Georgian sovereignty.

13.12.90 State of emergency declared in Georgia's Southern Ossetia region after ethnic violence on 12.12.90.

16.12.90 200,000 rally in Kishinyor, Moldavia's capital.

21.12.90 Georgia's Supreme Council to pass a law on 24.12.90 establishing a national guard as a prelude to an independent Georgian army.
21 soldiers wounded in ethnic violence within an army battalion in the Ukraine.

24.12.90 Gorbachev orders crackdown on unrest in Moldavia.

31.12.90 Moldavian parliament votes to accept Gorbachev's call to order.

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ACADEMIC SILVER ANNIVERSARY: PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF UNIVERSITY SINCE 1966

by A. D. Harvey

I went up to Oxford twenty-five years ago this month. I have been in or close to universities ever since, though I have found in them very little of what they had once seemed to promise.

Going to Oxford meant something: till I got there. I was twelve when I first confided to someone — it was my form teacher — that I wanted to go to Oxford after I left school. I can't imagine where I got the idea from. My father, though the best educated of his siblings, had chosen a career as a tree-feller, and my mother, a Hungarian immigrant, made dresses: but I don't think any of her customers had been to Oxford. The supremacy of the two ancient seats of learning was part of folk culture, even in the ancestral mortgaged property in the back streets alongside the REME workshops in Colchester. Later, when I went to Oxford for my interviews, it was the furthest journey I had ever undertaken, apart from one nauseous day trip to Calais, and the prettiest fifteen year old at the Girls' High School was so impressed when I returned with an Open Scholarship that she went out with me for a whole month, even though we didn't know what to say to each other.

I suppose the point was that I and everyone I knew imagined that at Oxford I would meet exciting significant people and by sharing exciting significant experiences with them would become an exciting significant person myself.

Going to Oxford meant much less when you were actually there. About the only democratic, egalitarian feature of the place was that nobody was impressed that you had got into Oxford, because everybody had got into Oxford. Even my Open Scholarship conferred little social advantage, beyond the fact that it entitled me to wear a special gown which gave better protection against the soup regularly slopped down our necks by the servants during dinner in formal hall. A St. Hilda's fresher who was the first girl I ever slept with mentioned that she had never been to bed with an Open Scholar before; but then she had only come up to Oxford a few week previously.

I suppose the one good thing about university was that it cured me — eventually — of my snobbish social aspirations, and it has become one of the rare pleasures of my life to see the disappointment of people who had previously thought quite other types frequented Oxford and Cambridge, when they learn I was at both.

Taking Oxford as the distillation, the most extreme refinement of the English university experience, I believe my experience was not untypical of my generation. And people are still going up to university with the kind of fantasies I had: especially mature students, whose psyches often bear deeper imprints of their struggle to get through than the psyches of ordinary school-leavers.

The first of these fantasies related to social life. This is one area where there have been major changes. When I went up to Oxford the undergraduate body was nearly four-fifths male, colleges were single-sex and those romantic turreted gateways had gates that were locked in most cases at 10.30 pm. One could be sent down for being found with a member of the opposite sex in one's rooms after the gate closed, though a member of one's own sex from another college was all right. How traditional it still was: climbing in, formal hall, sconcing, queueing up in *sub-fusc* to be matriculated, college rugger, Eights Week, Commem Balls, swearing not to kindle a fire in the Bodleian Library, the chapel bell tolling endlessly every morning to summon us to breakfast. Attitudes to women were largely those of the Regency Period, very slightly modified by the influence of suffragism, Marie Stopes, Mary Quant, and the London Rubber Company. The numerical disproportion between the sexes within the university was to some extent balanced out by the existence of two teacher-training colleges, training programmes for nurses at the local hospitals, two exclusive secretarial colleges, three proverbially randy girls' grammar schools, and a couple of institutions halfway between crammers and finishing schools, known as Beechlawn and St. Clares. The girls from the secretarial colleges and, especially, Beechlawn provided a fascinating sidelight on the culture of the English Upper Middle Classes when compared with the members of the university's women's colleges. In terms of profession, income, educational attainment, the parents who sent their offspring to Beechlawn and the secretarial colleges came from the same social class as the parents of the majority of women undergraduates but the Beechlawn and secretarial college girls seem to have been bred for looks and trained to dress prettily, and with some attention to colour combination, whereas the undergraduates, conceivably bred for something else, seemed notably less photogenic, and though two or three years older, clad themselves in ill-matched garments, though not necessarily cheap ones. It was astonishing how easily one could tell the two groups apart: and it was not because the Beechlawn girls had any monopoly on facial expressions of wide-eyed vacuity. The various segregated strata within the Oxford social scene stimulated eagerness to get together with the opposite sex. There were college discotheques and dozens of gate-crashable parties, and a general culture of collecting acquaintances as rapidly and profusely as possible. People who had no taste for this lifestyle simply opted out into invisibility. Years later I met a man who had been at ultra-fashionable Christ Church during the same years as I had been at middlingly-acceptable-but-notoriously-alcoholic St. John's. He had so hated Oxford that he had held down a night job with Securicor throughout his three undergraduate years.

Oxford was probably an extreme case. Even at Cambridge in the early 1970s, in spite or because of an even more exiguous supply of women, the atmosphere was less hectic, less desperately social, though a fashion for free festivals in college gardens and a series of sit-ins, meant that there were frequently much larger gatherings at Cambridge than I remembered from Oxford: but the tendency was to stay within the group one

had arrived with. At Newcastle and Aberystwyth, where I spent some months in 1971, things were even staider. But comparison with other universities is difficult because there was a detectable change in social norms between the 1960s and the 1970s, and I left Oxford just at the cusp of the change.

Part of the change involved sex. What one might call the public face of sex is today the mirror image of what it was twenty-five years ago. No doubt the national quota of couplings per twenty-four hours is the same, but in the late 1980s and early 1990s AIDS has made sex an uncomfortable topic: in the 1960s on the other hand sex was all the vogue, as if only recently discovered, and the contraceptive pill, though used by less than a fifth of fertile women, had much the same symbolic reverberations within the culture of permissiveness as AIDS now has within a culture of inhibition. The Swinging Sixties' over-exposure of sex gave way to a retreat into privacy during the Edward Heath years. Changes in the availability of rented — or squatted — property meant that more and more unmarried couples began to set up some sort of home together, and cohabitation, more or less unusual in the 1960s, became more commonplace even amongst students. 'Living with a man,' a current enough phrase at Oxford in the late '60s, had meant not cohabitation but sex in a single bed twice a week, with joint appearances in public in between: by the mid '70s the phrase had regained its more literal meaning. The possibility of cohabitation may not have made student love affairs more stable, but had its effect in making sexual relationships less part of a group activity.

Hashish-smoking, which probably peaked in fashionability in the year 1970, also encouraged a withdrawal from the public whirl. Instead of going out to look for excitement, one stayed at home with one's cronies to look for stupor. At student parties in bed-sit land the room where it was all happening ceased to be the room next to the booze where everyone was bopping and hoping their partner would be ready for a grope by the time the next slow number came on the record-player; it became the room as far away as possible from the booze where the joints were circulating. And sooner or later people ceased going to parties to search out the room with the circulating joint, because it was easier to stay at home and let it all happen there.

These changes were not of course a development rooted in the university, but were an aspect of national culture — perhaps even western culture — as a whole. Student social life was simply one variety, or one sub-group of varieties — of the social life of young people in Britain, and changed with the changes at large. And at no time during the period of my own personal experience does it seem that student life generally, or Oxford student life more particularly, represented the most exciting, the most glamorous, the most dynamic example of what was going on. It seems that university life really did offer a kind of pre-eminence in the 1930s and 1950s, when young people outside academe had fewer leisure facilities at their disposal and, because generally living with their parents till they married, enjoyed only limited personal freedom, but the general boom and ferment of the 1960s changed this, and by 1970 the university social

scene was becoming second-rate and marginal even in relation to the psychologically contracting youth culture of the post '60s era. In the big music venues in London, girls used to strip off and signify their approval of the music by dancing naked close up to the band. There was no chance of your average uptight Somerville undergraduate doing that at Oxford. Typically enough, the first time I saw a girl strip off and dance naked in front of the band was at Cambridge, but in the dead period between Trinity Term and Long Vac Term when there were no undergraduates in residence, and a couple of years after such displays had gone out of fashion in London.

Apart from the promiscuous social excitements that Oxford seemed to offer, I also had fantasies about meeting significant people on a more individual basis. Here too I was to be disappointed, though I now feel my expectations were illegitimate in any case. Sir Herbert Creedy, who had been Lord Kitchener's private secretary during the First World War, was an honorary fellow of my college and often dined at High Table. I never had the opportunity to speak to this piece of history. Similarly at Cambridge I often found myself in the way of Prince Charles's bicycle on the paths between Trinity and the faculty buildings in West Road, but apart from registering how incredibly fit and healthy the Heir Apparent looked, I took nothing away from these encounters. I have had rather more to do, of course, with certain of the great names in scholarship of the past quarter century. Keith Thomas was my tutor at Oxford; J. H. Plumb almost became my doctoral supervisor at Cambridge but wriggled out of it, possibly offended by the way my lip curled when I noticed the complete set of C. P. Snow novels on his book shelf; Herbert Butterfield was one of the examiners of my PhD and later invited me to lunch; later still I sometimes used to sit next to Frank Kermode at dinner. I feel however that famous academics don't really count as famous people. In any case, all the famous academics I have had anything to do with fairly soon gave indications that they regarded me with unmitigated aversion, with the exception of the proverbially kind Sir Herbert Butterfield, who died before I had the opportunity to see much of him.

With my contemporaries I seem to have been unlucky in a different way. The ideological and moral ferment of the 1960s, however half-baked, deflected many talents into directions they might otherwise not have taken, and in terms of conventional success the age-group that reached adulthood in the late 1960s is something of a lost generation. There were three boys in my class at grammar school who were more memorable than anyone I met at Oxford. People who came up after I left seem to have done rather better than my own contemporaries. The only person I overlapped with at Oxford who has so far made it into the Cabinet is William Waldegrave, whom I voted for as President of the Union in my first year: a chap called Tony Bird had persuaded me that the future of the Oxford University Conservative Association depended on maintaining the old St. Johns's/Christ Church alliance. President of the Union may have been Waldegrave's limit: he has not turned out an entirely convincing Health Secretary. At

the other end of the political spectrum were Mike Rosen, who has ended up writing children's verse, and Tariq Ali, whose role as *eminence grise* in Pakistan contributed to the collapse of the only progressive government that country has had in recent years.

Apart from those destined for future notoriety, there ought by rights to have been others, intrinsically more interesting but above the vanity of seeking the limelight, loved and richly appreciated by a small circle of confidants, and guaranteed eventual recognition as latter-day Spinozas and Thomas Trahernes, but of whom the public at the moment know nothing: but I knew nothing of them either.

Of course the university as meeting place is theoretically only a function of the university as a place of intellectual discovery and awakening. The strongest resemblance however between universities and the larger world that contains them is in the separation between celebrity and merit, and while it would be untrue to say that no respect is given in British universities to intellectual achievement, the fact is that in most cases the intellectual achievement that is accorded respect is transparently bogus. (Hasn't the man ever heard of Terry Eagleton?' cry dissenting voices at this point: 'And what about Simon Schama?'). Reputations for cleverness begin to be manufactured at undergraduate level, and are refurbished at successive stages, till, after official recognition in the award of a knighthood, death or senility removes the individual whose reputation had been so serviceable to so many people, leaving posterity to wonder what it was the man's genius consisted of, since it has left so few solid memorials behind. At the undergraduate level the degree to which reputations are the creation of socially exclusive cliques is pretty obvious: it becomes less obvious later in successful careers but that is because the sleight of hand involved has become more subtle. The essential point is that intellect does not confer status at university: status, a social product derived from innumerable cross-currents of snobbishness and peer-competition, confers a reputation for intellect.

In any case, intellectual achievement, in any real sense, conflicts with what universities have come to recognize as their main ideological function, the maintenance of habits of mental conservatism.

The body of knowledge which academics inherit and transmit is crucial to their self-esteem and self-image. It consists very largely of what they learnt as undergraduates and what brought them success in their final exams and thereby provided their entry ticket into the profession. The body of knowledge is also vital in establishing the identity of one's 'discipline' as distinct from other 'disciplines', which explains why attempts to break down the barriers between e.g., Literature and History and Social Sciences have resulted in nothing more substantial than a couple of Polytechnic 'Cultural Studies' programmes, taught by people whose devotion to teaching and gardening has precluded any systematic attempt at the global rethinking which must necessarily be the basis for a real interdisciplinary advance. There are even those who believe that publications in more than one 'discipline' cancel each other out, so that to publish a

couple of books on English Literature and a couple of books on British History is equivalent to not having published anything.

In theory academics are constantly refurbishing their minds by an obscure process known as 'research', and students often complain that their lecturers are too preoccupied with 'research' to give sufficient attention to their teaching. The students would be astonished if they knew how desultory most of the research in question turned out to be, and how rarely it was published. Academics also talk of 'keeping up with current research' but this too is an instance of campus claptrap. Generally they remain unaware of new work even in their own fields unless the author is an established name for name-dropping purposes, or gave a paper at a conference they attended, or sent them an off-print. In other words the 'research' that one keeps up with is filtered through the mechanisms of deference and cliquism on which scholarly reputations actually depend.

The ageing of the university teaching profession inevitably reinforces the authoritarian tendencies inherent in preserving a 'corpus of knowledge', but even the process whereby young academics enter the profession is organized so as to exclude original and creative scholars. It is regarded as far more important that a new appointee should 'fit in' with his colleagues, however moribund, than that he should have proven himself capable of infusing new life into his subject speciality. The importance of confidential referees' reports in the appointments procedure makes it desirable, first, that one should have a prestigious doctoral supervisor and second, that one's own research should be easily transferrable on to the map already drawn (or inherited) by the supervisor. It is true that the exercise of slotting one's own research into a framework that flatters the ego of one's supervisor may lead to tensions, but it is precisely those supervisees who show their resentment least who tend to be pushed into vacancies. The best way of not showing resentment, obviously, is being incapable of feeling any, and so a premium is placed on instinctive imitativeness and inborn deficiencies in the way of moral and intellectual integrity. Let it be said, however, that this is not because academics have taken to heart Dean Swift's observation that one adopts the same posture in climbing as in crawling: a teacher disposed to apply the satirical writings of Swift, or Pope's *Dunciad*, to his own professional situation would be unlikely to obtain employment.

Careers will always depend on favouritism, sycophancy, and the expedient adoption of modish views, when there is no real standard of merit. This has been amply demonstrated within other institutions, such as business corporations, the army, political parties, and it is not surprising that this is one topic university social psychologists steer well clear of.

In fact rather a lot of topics are steered clear of at university. G. K. Chesterton wrote in his autobiography, 'When the public theory of a thing is different from the practical reality of that thing, there is always a convention of silence that cannot be broken; there are things that cannot be said in public'. This is certainly true of university life. Universities are supposed to be concerned with maintaining standards, for example, but

any discussion of professional incompetence is taboo; it is as if academics see themselves as a kind of priesthood, elevated by the sacramental nature of their examining and degree-giving power, and ordained to carry out their functions irrespective of any question of personal unworthiness. Academic freedom is 'freedom' only in the specialized sense of co-opted membership of a closed corporation. Partly because of government demands for economy and efficiency, partly because of their peculiar interpretation of the Thatcherite dogma that any public institution capable of showing a profit ought to be converted to private property, academics are now hanging together in self-defense and mutual support to the most extraordinary extent. Despite continuing rhetoric about the free interchange of ideas, pluralism of opinion, especially on matters pertaining to careers, has gone out of fashion. When, over a hundred years ago, the greatly respected Charles Eliot Norton refused to support Bernard Berenson's application for a Parker Travelling Fellowship at Harvard, his colleagues subscribed a purse of $750 for Berenson from their own pockets. Imagine such a thing happening in a modern British university!

It certainly never happened to me. I have always been bookish. I submitted my first manuscript to a publisher at the age of twelve and when I was thirteen spent successive school holidays reading novels at the rate of three a day. There is a romance in the printed word that evaporates as one begins to get one's own words into print. It is not just the type face and the multiple-digit page numbers. It is the image behind the printed word, of book-lined rooms in country rectories, of studious lives in quiet back streets, of sunbeams dancing in the miasma of dust rising from packets of letters last perused three generations previously. Angus Wilson's *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*, which I first read as a research student, encapsulates the magic of scholarship, the alchemistical fascination of superimposed layers of human awareness. It was a book I had been waiting to discover, for it put together so much that had been coalescing in my mind. Even before my reading of *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*, the romance of scholarship had taken on an additional flesh and blood and poignancy from my having fallen head over heels for a mini-skirted medievalist two years ahead of me at Oxford, a not un-Angus Wilsonish personage who had already taken a congratulatory First and who used to manifest herself periodically, in very short mini-skirts, in the Bodleian Library, where she would pore over books relating to what was to become her life's work, the study of virginity in the Fourteenth Century. Even when, a year after my discovery of *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*, I was trying to place my first scholarly article I was much more concerned with the impressions it would make on the leggy Miss M. than with any help it might give me when looking for a university post. (For the record, it had no effect either way.) Looking back I can see that I was carried forward into research by a kind of momentum derived from the enthusiasms of the 1960s; but I soon became addicted to research for its own sake, and found myself working much harder and thinking far more originally than I had ever done as an undergraduate. But in doing so, it seems I placed myself beyond some sort of

academic pale.

Although, having been born in October, I had been one of the oldest children in my class throughout my school years, I held the position of the youngest person with a PhD at Cambridge for several months. Later I became probably the only person to lecture for both the History and the English faculties at Cambridge while teaching for Part One of the Economics Tripos. But my teaching, though involving longer hours than the teaching undertaken by the fellows of the Cambridge colleges, was on a part-time basis, paid by the hour, and when it came to applying for a salaried post candidates without PhD's or teaching experience always, according to the impenetrable standards of academe, seemed stronger candidates.

Perhaps the quality of my work was to blame. The fact that I had not been asked to rewrite and resubmit my PhD, as happened to one of the most eminent Cambridge historians of political ideas, and had not been refused a doctorate and awarded a lower degree, as happened to two of the full Professors at the Open University, does not mean my work was any good. My first book is generally regarded as a mere text book, utilizing as it does materials from only twenty-three separate archives. Ten years after it was published, the shortest chapter was published under someone else's name as an original article in *History*, which is said to reject ninety per cent of articles submitted to it. My second book was spoken of by a distinguished expert in its field as 'very inaccurate in parts', though it supplied the same person with the central argument for an inaugural lecture when subsequently appointed a professor at Cambridge.

Bearing in mind how paranoid and embittered so many successful academics seem to be, perhaps the same faults of temper may be permitted an unsuccessful one.

Eventually, after literally 700 applications for university posts and research fellowships and two unsuccessful interviews, I was appointed a Lecturer II at a Polytechnic. This institution, as a result of the process of linguistic degeneration whereby mutton has become lamb and walk-in closets have become guest bedrooms, is soon to be redesignated a university, but as this hasn't happened yet I shall pass over my three depressing years there. Next I found myself teaching at a university in southern Italy. The role of the university in society seemed quite different in Italy. A *laurea*, theoretically equivalent to a MA, was required as a condition of application for a much wider range of public and corporate employments than would seem appropriate in Britain, but then the main function of public and corporate employment seemed to be keeping the educated middle-classes off the street. The real dynamism of Italian society seemed to be in the interstices of the public and corporate sector. Intellectual life seemed much more independent of academe than in Britain: intellectuals were frequently graduates, but so also were a significant proportion of the unemployed. (The figure of 150,000 qualified doctors without jobs was often quoted, and I can at least testify to the expertise of those with jobs, having spent some weeks in a provincial Italian hospital: on the other hand I also knew

a bus-driver with a law degree, who accorded much more with my idea of a bus-driver than of a lawyer.) Compared to Italy, Britain seemed a country where universities, though processing a much smaller proportion of school leavers, had a much more powerfully pervasive influence on the country as a whole. If Italy's universities closed down for a year, it wouldn't make the slightest practical difference, except to hundreds of thousands of students preparing for exams, and nobody, least of all the professors, cared about *them*. No doubt there are fundamental, even if immeasurable, differences between the psychological and moral underpinning of different societies, even in neighbouring countries. In Britain, I keep telling myself, universities really are one of the key sectors. But every now and again, when I have a cold perhaps, or have been waiting three-quarters of an hour for a No. 73 bus, the notion sneaks up on me that *universities don't really matter*!

Well, of course I don't really believe that. The culture of intellectual timorousness that flourishes in Britain's universities inevitably limits the extent to which they could have any truly positive influence, but this does not mean universities have *no* influence. It is merely that their influence is increasingly a negative one. This carefully considered opinion brings me a long way from the solipsistic optimism of twenty-five years ago. As with Wordsworth's:

> Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive
> But to be young was very heaven!

it is difficult to separate the excitement of the historical moment at which one enters adulthood from the standard exhilarations of growing up. But at the risk of sounding like yet another '60s left over trumpeting the marvels of that alluring but elusive decade, I wish to assert that the 1960s really were years coloured and intensified by a subjective mood of boom and expansion, and that the universities — many of them brand new institutions in those years — really did participate in the mood of enlarged possibility. Yet the 1960s boom was probably more delusory in Britain than in most other countries. We were so stimulated by our sudden self-emancipation from the trammels of sexual puritanism, imperialism and class-consciousness that we failed to recognize the refashioning of sexual exploitation inherent in the 1960s brand of sexual liberalism, we failed — despite the wars in Vietnam and Nigeria — to perceive the true dimensions of Neo-Imperialism, we failed — especially of course at Oxford — to see that new classlessness was simply the old system of privilege, with a wider range of permitted accents (the latter, in any case, sometimes assumed). Most of all we, or at least our government, failed to reorganize our economy, upon which every aspect of social life ultimately depended. Up until 1960 every British government had been confronted by the problems created by what it had *succeeded* in achieving during the previous decade: the 1960s were the years when governments began to be confronted by the consequences not of their successes but of their omissions.

Today we are struggling limply with the consequences of thirty years of omission, thirty years of failure to make sound decisions, thirty years in which successive governments have failed to come up to the mark.

Inevitably the universities have had a share in this failure, though part of the problem is that very few academics acknowledge that their profession has any responsibility, whether moral, psychological or intellectual, for what happens off the campus. Indeed academics are more and more tending to deny responsibility for what happens on campus. They are therefore peculiarly well-suited for training members of the key professions in a society in which, increasingly, nothing works properly.

No doubt it is a question of priorities. The payment of lecturers' salaries is subject to far less delay and complication in Britain than in France and Italy.

[A. D. Harvey graduated BA at Oxford in 1969 and was awarded a PhD at Cambridge in 1972, publishing his first scholarly article, 'The Ministry of all the Talents: the Whigs in Office, February 1806 to March 1807' in *The Historical Journal* in the same year. His first book, *Britain in the Early Nineteenth Century* came out in 1978 and his second, *English Poetry in a Changing Society 1780-1825* in 1980.]

POEMS

by Alamgir Hashmi

ASK NOT

Ask not what your country can do for you
— in August, July, June, or May.
That is to put Descartes before the horse,
even before the horse
has had the sense to bolt
through the barn-door,
or time for remorse.
All pastures emulsify
in the wish's mouth.
After all, we all have a steak in the country
— somehow every Friday.

CRUSOE'S ISLAND

The French gun in the park has dated.
It is aimed at the water.
Long silent, it still fires a contour shot
into the island's body, its angular map.
I read as I walk along,
these words that time has written here
wave after wave after wave
of the ancient, emerald sea.
The last one broke against the shore at midnight.

A breakfast of fresh coconut
and a solitude that might tempt a Columbus
to change his plans, take a local woman,
move into a makeshift beach hut
and try to forget with her
the secrets that the northern sea holds.
Her black hair as long as the rowing
back to Spain. Why write the journal?

Actually, he landed more than twenty
miles across, long before the mango
was indentured from India.

I step out of the clump of palm and sugarcane
to view the postcard sky in real sunlight.

No, I am glad of the water that connects fairly
and disconnects. I do not want a road
built across the sea to the far-off, rich
destinations; only the island's rippled
speech in my left ear,
the succulent texts written at their own pitch.

[Editor's Note: Professor Hashmi of Pakistan has published seven collections of his poetry.]

THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE SUEZ CRISIS OF 1956

by Sarah Newman

THE Suez Canal, important since its opening in 1869 as the link between Europe and Asia, runs through Egyptian territory. By custom and legislation an international waterway open to shipping without restriction, by 1955, despite UN ruling, ships bound to or registered in Israel were not allowed through it.

At the end of 1955 the governments of the United States and United Kingdom had agreed to offer Egypt a loan towards the financing of the Aswan dam. There was also to be a loan from the World Bank. On July 19, 1956 the American offer was withdrawn. The US government was displeased that Nasser had not yet begun negotiations with those neighbouring states that would be affected by the diversion of the Nile. Moreover he was buying arms from the Soviet Union, and had recognised communist China with whom he was completing a barter deal.

On July 26 Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal Company. The possibility of this had been discussed since the 1920s, considered after Naguib's 1952 revolt, studied by Nasser since February 1956, and made more likely by British evacuation of the Canal Zone that June. The Company concession was due to expire in 1968.

Eden, who assumed Egyptians incapable of operating the Canal, regarded the position created by nationalisation, with Nasser's 'hand on our windpipe', as 'the most hazardous our country has known since the 1940s'. In this view he was supported by his Chancellor of the Exchequer, Harold Macmillan.

Australia and New Zealand felt their national survival depended on the Suez route to Britain and Western Europe, and on peace in the Middle East. The Canal was 'Australia's lifeline' and 'jugular vein'. Casey, Australian Minister for External Affairs, referred to the dependence of the Australian economy on the 'free and unfettered flow of cargoes and ships through the Canal', and to 'the high-handed action of the Egyptians'. On hearing the news the Australian Premier, R. G. Menzies, left Washington for London. At a British Cabinet meeting, 14 August 1956, he was to pronounce: 'Colonel Nasser's action followed the pattern of all military dictators'. New Zealand's Prime Minister, Holland, stated in Los Angeles: 'The Suez Canal is vital to Britain, and Britain is vital to New Zealand'.

India, Pakistan and Ceylon supported Nasser. Rajagopalachari, a former Governor General, described Menzies' broadcast from London as 'the true voice of British imperialism, speaking from the grave'. India, a 'principal user of this waterway', was eager to avoid conflict. Ceylon's economy was dependent on the Canal route, through which 60-70% of her exports passed, as did 40-50% of her imports, for her the nationalisation was 'the most serious one single thing since the end of the war'.

Canada was uninterested in the Middle East. Its High Commissioner stressed the importance of settling the dispute peacefully, of working through the United Nations.

South Africa opposed UN intervention in any country's domestic jurisdiction. Closure of the Canal could result in more revenue for South Africa due to increasing the importance of the Cape route.

While Britain and France secretly prepared for war, negotiations took place. August 16 to 23 the Conference of 22 User Nations met in London to consider the situation brought about by nationalisation. Canada and South Africa took no part. To Canada the question was 'primarily a European matter... not a matter which particularly concerns Canada. We have no oil there. We don't use the Canal for shipping'. The only African countries invited were Egypt, which refused to attend, and Ethiopia.

Britain, Australia and New Zealand, supported eventually by Pakistan, favoured an international operating board for the Canal. Ceylon and India, led by Krishna Menon, were among those hostile to the idea. On August 25 it was decided to send a delegation of five, led by Menzies, to Egypt to discuss the proposal. They were there 3rd to 9th September. In vain. Menzies' anti-Egyptian prejudices may have led him to provide Eden with an unrealistic assessment of the situation.

Ethiopia, Japan and Pakistan then opted out of the Canal Users' Association. The latter, as their spokesman, stated 'In so far as the Users' Association is concerned, we are... not sure what exactly is contemplated and... our attendance at the conference does not in any way bind us to be a party to this association... We cannot, in any case, associate ourselves with the use of force or with any solution imposed on Egypt against her will'.

By 21 September Australia and New Zealand were the only Commonwealth countries fully backing Britain. Within Australia the Labour Party's disapproval of Menzies was increasing. Evatt, its leader, accusing him of 'gunboat diplomacy', said 'We cannot talk to nations like that, no matter how small and weak they are, with any effect'. Rumour spread that Casey was opposing Menzies' line.

In New Zealand, Sydney Holland, echoing Savage's 1939 statement, averred: 'New Zealand goes and stands where the Mother country goes and stands'. But he did not denounce Nasser.

Britain and France, having brought the Suez dispute to the notice of the Security Council on September 12, on 23 September requested UN action. Public debate in the Security Council came on 5 October, Australia, then on the Security Council, backed the British case.

Meanwhile, in collaboration with the British and French, an Israeli attack was being prepared. On October 30th the British Cabinet received reports that Israeli troops had entered Egypt. This marked the next major stage of the crisis. Since October 25 the British Cabinet had been secretly discussing what to do in the event of an Israeli invasion; they now drafted an ultimatum demanding that Egyptians and Israelis both withdraw to 10 miles from the canal, under threat of force from Britain and France.

Commonwealth High Commissioners, Opposition leaders, the House of Commons and the American President were then informed of the Cabinet decision.

As the Egyptians did not leave their own territory the Anglo-French battle plan was put into effect: Anglo-French forces attacked Egyptian airfields on October 31st.

This aggressive act had shattering effect. The UN Security Council met in emergency session, due to British and French use of the veto, this was followed by an emergency session of the UN. British public opinion was divided. Labour opposed the invasion. Britain's action antagonised both the Commonwealth and the US, where President Eisenhower had all along opposed the use of force. Members of the Commonwealth had not been consulted: the Asian members and Canada were horrified at what seemed to them a resurgence of colonialism.

Eden may have seen Nasser as Hitler or Mussolini — 'I find it strange that so few, if any have compared these events to 1936 — yet it is so like . . . so many seem to fail to see this and give Nasser almost as much trust as others gave Hitler years ago'. To the Pakistanis *his* actions resembled those of Hitler: *Dawn*, Karachi publication of the Moslem League, 1 November 1956: 'Britain produces a Hitler who throws his country's honour and all cherished moral, human and international values which it has fostered in the past, out of the windows of the Houses of Westminster . . . opening a new and unbelievable chapter of perfidy and violence in the history of the human race . . . Is this not the rise once again of bigoted and perverted Christendom against the world of Islam in alliance with the Jews? Is this not a threat poised against Moslems from the Atlantic to the Pacific?'

In a Commons speech 31st October, Gaitskell, then Leader of the Opposition denounced the invasion: 'a possitive assault upon the solidarity of the Commonwealth'.

The British government declared there had been no time to consult the Commonwealth after the Israeli attack of October 29th. In fact the Cabinet had been discussing action to be taken in the event of Israeli aggression since October 25th. On this issue, Commonwealth consultation, the following statement was made by Menzies in the Australian House of Representatives, 1st November: 'Is the United Kingdom at fault in not having engaged in a pre consultation with the other British Commonwealth countries? Our answer to this question is that she was not at fault at all. The circumstances were those of great emergency . . . Effective consultation . . . would plainly have occupied considerable time and the urgent position might have fallen into irretrievable disaster'.

Dealing with the same question, on November 6th, the High Commissioner in South Africa stated: 'It is true there was no prior consultation with the Union or with any other Commonwealth Government . . . But it will be a great mistake to infer from this case, caused as it was by circumstances beyond our control, that there has been any change of policy over consultation with other Commonwealth Governments or that any change is contemplated . . . The UK's object has always been and will remain to

consult with all Commonwealth countries about issues of importance affecting them. The only exceptions (and those much against their will) must be those cases, such as the present situation, in which the speed of events puts it beyond their power to do so'.

In fact it was not the need for speed but for secrecy, coupled with the knowledge that most members would object to the idea of armed intervention by Britain, that prevented Commonwealth consultation. On the BBC on November 4 Hugh Gaitskell spoke of the consequences of the British attack on Egypt: 'A deep, deep division in the Commonwealth, only Australia and New Zealand support us. Canada and South Africa have abstained. India, Pakistan and Ceylon are all against us. This is a very grave consequence.'

James Griffiths, deputy leader of the Labour Party, spoke in similar vein on the BBC, November 8th: 'During the past half century we have been slowly but surely achieving an ideal unique in human history... Now let us look at what the action of the British Government has done this last week to the Commonwealth. The Canadian Prime Minister has declared that the present crisis has stretched the bonds of the Commonwealth more than any event since the Second World War. The Government of Pakistan has unreservedly condemned our aggressive action, and strong demands have been made in Pakistan that they should leave the Commonwealth. One of our oldest friends in India, a past Governor-General, has called for India's withdrawal from the Commonwealth; and one of our newest Dominions, Ceylon, has felt compelled to vote against us in the United Nations. Australia and New Zealand are, like us, deeply divided. The whole concept of the Commonwealth, and its contribution to world peace, are in danger'.

Canada too was divided, John Diefenbaker, the Progressive Conservative spokesman on external affairs, backed Britain, criticised Nasser and feared that Canada would become 'a mere tail on the American kite'. Anglo-American co-operation was a main consideration in Canadian foreign policy. The Prime Minister, Louis St. Laurent, and his Foreign Secretary, Lester Pearson, were scandalized, not only by lack of consultation, but by the use of force, and the growing rifts between Britain and the US as well as within the Commonwealth.

Indians expressed 'surprise and indignation' at Britain's 'naked aggression', 'going back to the predatory methods of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', and 'flagrant violation of the UN charter', while protesting against Britain's acting 'against all conventions of humanity'.

As a Moslem member of the Baghdad Pact, Pakistan protested against the invasion; popular demonstrations attacked the government for not protesting more vigorously. The President of the Awami League urged Pakistan giving up the policy of alignment with the West, and quitting both the Pact and SEATO.

Ceylon too urged withdrawal from Egyptian territory.

At the UN Pearson urged the setting up of an international emergency force: Gaining the nickname 'Swami' Pearson, he worked closely with the

Indian delegation to achieve this end. He was probably fortunate in having 'Arthur Lall, India's permanent representative at the UN to work with, until Krishna Menon's arrival.

In principle, Britain appeared ready to accept the idea of a UN force, though achieving agreement on the details was to be less easy. The plan for an Emergency Force was adopted by the General Assembly on November 4. On November 5 Britain and France dropped paratroops at Port Said and Port Fuad. On 6 November an Anglo-French seaborne force invaded Port Said. However on that same day their governments agreed to a cease-fire, which came into force November 7, the day on which the General Assembly agreed to set up UNEF. Much of the credit for this goes to Pearson, the main channel of communication between Washington and London in the period from 29 October to 7 November.

UNEF's composition presented another problem. It was agreed that permanent members of the Security Council should not contribute. Nasser was unwilling to accept a body which included representatives of Canada, New Zealand or, because of her membership of the Baghdad Pact, of Pakistan. South Africa and Australia remained aloof. New Zealand was prepared to back the force, both to rescue Britain from an awkward situation and because it supported all plans for collective security, but her offer was not accepted.

Egyptian hostility to a Canadian presence was due to the fact that the Queen of Canada was also Queen of Britain. Menon put pressure on Nasser over this, and it was agreed that, instead of the Queen's Own Rifles, Canada should provide an air transport and field ambulance unit, with technical and administrative troops. UNEF Commander, General Burns, was Canadian. And eventually Canadians made up a fifth of the force. The second largest contingent came from India.

The British withdrawal was complete by 22 December.

To Australia and New Zealand, Suez showed their exposed position as appendages of SE Asia, 'where people still fight'. Menzies' support for Britain was ineffective, and damaged Australian interests, making it harder for the country to adjust to the changed position in Asia, undoing previous efforts to improve relations there. After the 1957 elections there was a change of government in New Zealand. The new Prime Minister went on a tour of Ceylon, India, Malaya, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand.

Canada gained prestige, due to its Secretary of State for External Affairs help in finding solutions to the crisis and rebuilding UK-US relations. Canada saw Suez as a Commonwealth crisis; other Commonwealth governments reacted according to what they saw as their national interests.

Lester Pearson stated on 27 November: 'We were anxious to do what we could to hold the Commonwealth together... At one stage after the fighting on land began it was on the verge of dissolution... If the United Kingdom and French forces had continued fighting, after the Egyptian and Israeli forces had accepted the cease-fire, I suggest the Commonwealth might not have been able to stand the strain; that the Asian members of

the Commonwealth might not have been able to remain in it in those circumstances'.

India, Pakistan and Ceylon all considered leaving the Commonwealth. At this stage none did. Krishna Menon said in the Lok Sabha, March 1957: 'There were two Commonwealth States — Ceylon and India ... against Britain ... in regard to the situation in the Middle East in the United Nations so, there is no question of inhibition in regard to judgments and policies'. Nehru confirmed this view, adding in regard to the Commonwealth association: 'Our policies are in no way conditioned or deflected from their normal course by that association ... when there are so many disruptive tendencies in the world, it is better to retain every association that is not positively harmful to us, than to break it'.

The crisis had shaken the Commonwealth, not broken it. Threat of its break-up heightened respect for its value. But it was clear that Britain could not rely on automatic support from the Commonwealth. This led to British reassessment of the Commonwealth's political value. And the lure of the European Economic Community grew.

[Editor's Note: In the *Literary Supplement* ('The Suez Echo', p.219) Leo Muray reviews Keith Kyle's *Suez*, published on the 35th anniversary of Suez.]

Literary Supplement

QUARTERLY FICTION REVIEW

by Betty Abel

Coromandel Sea Change. Rumer Godden. Macmillan. £14.99. *The Oath Takers*. Naomi Mitchison. Balnain Books. £6.95. *Sea-Green Ribbons*. Naomi Mitchison. Balnain Books. £6: 95. *Lemprière's Dictionary*. Lawrence Norfolk. Sinclair-Stevenson. £14.95.

Rumer Godden's new novel, *Coromandel Sea Change*, is a subtle and delicately unfolded Indian tale in which the romantic outline of the plot tells less than half the story. Behind the exotic Coromandel beach palm setting there is a strongly implied and carried out sub-plot depicting the unfathomable religious and social background of an Indian village community in the throes of preparing for a local election. Superficially, democratic procedures are the order of the day, a hang-over from British rule although an unadmitted one. Krishnan, the candidate for the Root and Flower Party (a name of his own devising) manages to stand the Raj tradition on its head whilst appearing to foster local ethnic pride by a lightning tactical stroke. In a dramatic pre-election move, he arranges a procession in which he appears as Krishna, the god revered locally, transformed from Krishnan, the charismatic, handsome, western educated village youth he really is.

The romantic plot is shattered when Mary Browne, the young English bride of a newly posted British diplomat, arrives at Patna Hall on honeymoon and becomes infatuated with Krishnan. She agrees to become his goddess-consort in the election pageant. The enchantment she finds in his temporarily adopted native hut amongst the scarlet cotton trees is soon translated into an idyll with Krishnan instead of an idyllic honeymoon with her conventional, bewildered husband, Blaise. Angry and uncomprehending, thoroughly Foreign Office trained, he meets the equally outraged village dignitaries with unwarranted contempt.

Rumer Godden's skill in producing a twofold denouement, along with its final tragic outcome, is unsurpassed. Krishnan's cynical expediency is revealed to Mary when the election-time loin cloth turns, after his success at the polls, into impeccably English lightweight suiting with a Harrow tie. Mary is doubly disillusioned.

The historical novels of Naomi Mitchison, highly imaginative and bearing deep scholarship lightly, are invariably refreshing to read. The character of two new stories, *The Oath Takers* and *Sea-Green Ribbons*, is no exception. Set in 9th-century Europe, *The Oath Takers* recounts the adventures of Drogo, a young Franklander who leaves the abbey where he has been nurtured in comparative ignorance of his ancestry, in order to find out where his allegiance and that of his countrymen truly lies. The recent death of Charlemagne, a turning point in history, has forced changes everywhere in both social and religious attitudes: but for the individual male the taking of an oath of allegiance to a lord or prince is still all important. Bereft of a leader, who will protect him? And to whose colours will he eventually be called? Above

all how does the Christian faith of his monkish mentors affect both these questions?

The spread of faith is a crucial aspect of the quest, with the Saracens an ever present threat. As the old loyalties disintegrate Drogo's journey takes him through many countries in search of certainty. His problems seem finally resolved when he reaches the Spanish Caliphate where the clearest stability is to be found. In Cordoba there are also the deepest unanswered questions, raised by the presence of an enormous mosque used for prayer and meditation by Moslems, Jews and Christians alike, for reasons never stated. Each of Drogo's encounters is as fresh as new paint. Each one contributes to the progress of his thinking as well as to his growing understanding of the dangers inherent in changing societies. It seems impossible that a novel of 176 pages should convey so great an insight into life in the feudal age and in the same breath present unmistakeable parallels with our own turbulent times.

Sea-Green Ribbons is set initially at the edge of the Thames 'three and a half centuries ago, and crowded, smokey London bursting out into new beliefs and ideas'. Sarah, a Dutch printer's daughter, is brought to London where the father finds he may not only worship more freely than in papist Holland but can also buy the newest printing machine and earn more money. Sarah joins the circle of the Leveller, John Lilburne, a convicted 'criminal' in post-Civil War terms because of his stated belief in the equality of all men. The background of religious zeal and its punishment, and a disastrous experience of marriage in London, cause her to flee to the country where, after learning of the death of her husband, she remarries and sails to Maryland with other pilgrims and refugees from harsh laws. A happier, newly fulfilled life there does not blind her to new religious bigotries or to the evils of black slavery. The fortunate combination in Naomi Mitchison of a born teller of tales and an unerring social historian provides a highly successful and enjoyable novel.

The extraordinary novel entitled *Lemprière's Dictionary* concerns a family quest occasioned by a bequest passed down through two hundred years. The present day descendant of a member of the East India Company (formed in about 1600) finds the manuscript whose contents were to govern his actions, as it had done those of his eighteenth-century ancestor. The structure of the classical dictionary of Lemprière is used as the basis of a novel which traces the mystery involving a hitherto unknown cabbala, deep within the East India Company and utilising its powerful commercial connections. Voyages of discovery, piratical thefts and plots faking the loss of ships bearing valuable cargoes are only a few of the activities of this 'inner wheel'. But they do not stop at murder; for the puzzling factor in the story is the reason for a century-long feud existing between the Lemprière family and the East India Company itself. Through the examination of the Dictionary published in 1788 by John Lemprière, his descendants try to discover the origin of a crime which particularly concerns them, that of a murder which he has solved and which subsequently results in tragedy for him too. He has followed his inborn passion for ancient history too far but he has at least resolved the old feud and has found out the Jersey origin of his family. The book, tortuous though many of the author's scholarly disquisitions appear to be, is rewarding in the quality of its prose and in the astonishing range of knowledge it covers. It has much in common with Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, although nothing in its content is similar: another clerkly 'who-dun-it', it reaches into the present and future as well as the past.

A form of historical novel in which the insignificant details as described by the author are true because fully investigated by him seems to bring the Lemprière *Dictionary* within the orbit of social history. Norfolk explains his method thus: although his novel is historical, there are certain conventions he has deliberately flouted in order to create dramatic effect: anachronisms, too, exist in it, partly for the same purpose but also to show the impact of 'prevalent' influences near the event in question. There are a good many 'historical groupings' of this kind, the better to demonstrate some influence on real or imagined incidents. 'Time sequences' are, he says, 'broadly correct'.

At intervals in the novel these and other divergences from the usual historical reckoning are explained. The interpenetration of fact and fiction is his stated aim but only to further the story, never to hinder its flow. Interpretation rather than literal narration has been his purpose: 'Generally my practice has been to take the thought-horizon in 1788 as the historical reality... If something could be imagined at the time (and I could write it credibly) then it went in whether it actually existed or not'. If language could be used as it now is, he says, then the use of modern technology and terminology is justified. Perhaps a new form of science fiction is by this token on the horizon, especially since Norfolk also invokes theory of Chaos in his description of the seige of La Rochelle in the 17th century, two hundred years before any such theory was known. Such cyclical views of history seem suspiciously like the deconstructive methods controversially used in literary criticism. It hardly seems necessary or appropriate to the work in hand and is more like destroying one thing in order to build something else with the pieces.

Also Received

Illuminations. Maureen Duffy. Sinclair-Stevenson. £13.95. The adventures of Hetty Dearden, a retired college lecturer, after attending a conference in Germany on the new Europe almost mirror those of a eighth-century nun whose letter is found in German archives. As head of a religious foundation in the Europe of Charlemagne the nun has to face changes similar to those of 20th century governments facing the demise of the Cold War in Europe. The book is written with intelligence and skill.

The Lady of Situations. Louis Auchinloss. Constable. £13.99. Forced by bankruptcy of her financier father to tread her own path to fortune, Natica Channery proves her true skill lies in negotiating the pitfalls of New York drawing rooms. She succeeds in achieving wealth and a dramatic reputation for social manoeuvring. Her adventurous life provides a vastly entertaining novel, in the inimitably sardonic style of the author.

Jennifer. David Holbrook. Robert Hale. £14.95. This story of a family's misfortunes is vividly and sympathetically written. From the aftermath of war wounds for the father to the cot death of the daughter's baby, their adventures are tellingly narrated.

A Season of Lamplight. Trefor Vaughan. Tabb House. £12.29. Violent acts performed by otherwise gentle people characterise this tense, fast moving tale set in Northern Ireland, round Crossmaglen. The author writes with an obviously thorough knowledge of the country and its tensions: his book is skilfully written and exciting to read.

THE MAN FROM NOWHERE

The Quiet Rise of John Major. Edward Pearce. Weidenfeld & Nicholson. £14.95.

John Major. Nesta Wyn Ellis. Macdonald. £13.95.

Edward Pearce won the race to produce the first book on Britain's new Prime Minister: he was narrowly ahead of Bruce Anderson and Nesta Wyn Ellis, and comfortably ahead of Nicholas Ridley. He paid a price, since he seems to have worked without an editor. A competent editor would have caught his all-too-frequent errata and mis-spellings, and the occasional infelicities of style. (Thus: the Bank that employed the young Mr. Major is 'Standard Charter' throughout; similarly the last Prime Minister's husband is 'Dennis', the Speaker 'Jack', not Bernard; a long quotation about the qualities of 'the Unknown Prime Minister' he takes to be a reference not to Bonar Law but to Baldwin.) Moreover some of the erudition of his word-usage involves the reader in recourse to a dictionary — or to Shakespeare: 'litotic', 'immiserating' and 'discandy'.

There are, however, compensations. Edward Pearce was for eight years the *Daily Telegraph's* Parliamentary sketchwriter, and his skilfully-etched portrait of the man who dislikes to be called 'the grey man' is accompanied by many, often disparaging, sketches of many of Mr. Major's colleagues. He has spoken to many people and makes lavish use of their views, notably those of Mr. Major's companion though opponent on Lambeth council, Ken Livingstone. He can write with punch and terseness; but the press-lobby man is not naturally addicted to kindness, as in his references to Mrs. Thatcher or to Douglas Hurd.

Nesta Wyn Ellis's treatment is less astringent, less sharply political, and more dependent on quotations from long conversations with the Majors and their friends. She draws on material in her own political profiles in *Women's Journal* or *The People's* Sunday magazine. She is addicted to guessing at John Major's 'unconscious thoughts' on great occasions, but she writes movingly on his affection for his home in Great Stukeley, the dream house the once-poor boy finally acquired.

The conclusions on the man? It is a valuable apprenticeship for a future Prime Minister to have served on a local housing authority. It is even more valuable for him to have worked with dedication not only on its committees, but to have studied his opponents' case with the same concern as his own. It helps if he has had a spell in the Whips' Office, and as Chief Secretary of the Treasury, as Foreign Secretary and as Chancellor. It helps too if his or her manners are impeccable, and if he (or she) is devoid of 'side'. These qualities alone will not in themselves of course guarantee entry to No. 10 after only eleven years in the House — and indeed some who reach it after a much longer service may not have had any of them. All these qualities help, however, only if opportunity knocks. They help still more if the lucky man (or woman) is phenomenally industrious, especially skilful in one-to-one negotiation, and not remotely conspiratorial. Despite the over-compact and undigested style of one, and the more 'gushy' style of the other, these are fascinating sketches of the new Prime Minister, a man who has come up the hard way. Each is a vivid reminder of the remarkable diversity of origins and talents of those who come to lead the Conservative Party.

ESMOND WRIGHT

THE EUROPEAN DEBATE

Europe of Many Circles. Richard Body. New European Publications. £14.95.

The European debate, now a generation old, gives rise to many analogies. The most insipid and misleading is that of the train and its impending departure. Surely we now know that the European development has not proceeded with a fixed track certainty. It is not the product of predictable and mechanistic economic and political relationships. On the contrary it is a development that proceeds organically and responds to European internal change and the challenges without.

Over thirty years ago Jean Monnet had a vision of constructing an integrated Europe able to withstand its Goliath neighbours of American capitalism and Soviet Communism. Today the giants have departed the field. The debate must take a new turn to account for such profound changes.

Sir Richard Body enters the controversy with a succinct and stimulating volume, *Europe of Many Circles.* Even before putting pen to paper the author commands respect. Since the 1950s he has argued with courtesy and obstinate conviction a range of causes, few popular with the political establishment, and some before their time. His views on agriculture and food hygiene have now become topical. His political and economic analysis of the European Community will add to an argument which now seems likely to be one of the factors at the forthcoming General Election. Richard Body rejects the centralised European state as providing either social contentment or economic fulfilment. He distrusts the affection for sheer size which is implicit in a single currency and its concomitant of converging economic, fiscal, and monetary policies. He believes that such a concentration of power is the objective of the politician rather than the wider public. He also makes a case — persuasively — that the internal disciplines of the single economy will require the goad of an implied external challenge. This will lead to 'Fortress Europe' policies with the protectionist spirit of the Common Agricultural Policy infecting much of Euro-industry. Indeed, this is all too likely should Germany turn away from her post war commitment to the social market economy and revert to the autarchic economics of the 1930s and earlier.

Richard Body makes the point sharply: 'Mega states are not made by God for the good of ordinary people; they are the artefacts of politicians who thirst for power'. By contrast the message of *Europe of Many Circles* is that the existing national structures of authority should be used to promote a diversity of co-operation on varying topics and involving varying national partners. Within the widest possible European partnership he sees a pattern of co-operation which avoids both exclusivity and the mega-concentration of power.

He seeks to build upon the past and Body quotes Kierkegaard approvingly: 'We must look forward but understand backwards'. Such views are irreverent if not insolent for a generation who have been told to think of the European debate in the terms of predestined growth for power at Brussels and Strasbourg.

Nonetheless, in the debate there is all to play for as Germany begins to test the formidable political power earned by her economic success. None can confidently predict the outcome: the debate rolls on, and the author's challenge becomes more topical rather than echoes of a closed controversy.

JOHN BIFFEN, M.P.

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

Epics of Everyday Life: Encounters in a Changing Russia. Susan Richards. Viking. £15.99.

When the reader finishes Susan Richards' book he is not surprised that it was awarded the *Yorkshire Post*'s 1991 Prize for Best First Book by an author. This is one of the most enjoyable and informative books written on Russia this century. What makes Miss Richards' book worth reading are those self-imposed limitations to which she refers in her title, 'Epics of Everyday Life'. For over four hundred years English visitors to Russia have written descriptions of the fascinating world they discovered. Earliest visitors described the savage splendours of the Muscovy Court. Later visitors, like Archdeacon Coxe, described everyday life but were limited because they did not speak Russian. The most comparable books in many ways are those written before 1914 by Stephen Graham or the two novels written by Hugh Walpole and set in Russia during the Great War. These were concerned with average Russians, not with Russian society or government. Their aim was to describe what they had seen. Susan Richards set herself the same task and when she does generalise she keeps her conclusions close to her experiences and readily admits that certain dilemmas are universal, not 'communist'.

The old Russia, so we have been told over the years, vanished in the Bolshevik *coup d'état* and later books about Communist Russia were written either by those anxious to discredit or by those, like the Webbs, gullible and simplistic. As the decades wore on it became increasingly difficult for people in the free world to know anything about Russian life: did people really support the regime, as pro-Communists insisted, or did they suffer under a totalitarian regime, as anti-communists insisted? Was there, in effect, a 'free' culture submerged by official rhetoric and a savage dictatorship? The answer has come through the collapse of the old order and this has allowed visitors like Susan Richards to roam about: the freedom of movement she enjoyed could not equal that of Stephen Graham under Tsar Nicholas II, but it is better than she would have enjoyed under Kruschev.

Miss Richards' book is based on four separate trips to the Soviet Union between 1988 and 1990. Her interest in Russia, and her mastery of the Russian language, stem from her early love of Russian literature. Indeed, her frequent allusions to famous literary characters and their creators are one of the most enjoyable aspects of this wonderful book. During her trips she stayed with Russians and travelled from Moscow to Siberia, Kiev and Azerbaijan. The aim of the book was to examine the reality behind what Pasternak called 'the tyranny of the glittering phrase', in other words, how the people she met coped with life in a communist paradise that was being transformed. As always in Russian history, whether under Peter the Great or Alexander II, the changes were being forced from the top. The world she found was one in which reality did not match the rhetoric which described it. She shows us the dilemma Gorbachev is facing in trying to reform a bureaucracy which was a world in itself by letting individual Russians tell their own story.

The world she describes is a fascinating one, a world in which things are never quite what they appear. She openly states that at times she found it difficult to retain her sense of reality, based as it was on our 'western' presumption that things are, or at least should be, as they appear. With us,

when they do not do so, the fact is normally known, attacked and frequently amended. In Russia it is known and accepted. Often she was depressed, deeply depressed at the problems Russians faced, especially those who genuinely wished to grab the freedoms which Gorbachev was holding out to them. She reminds us of the story that Peter the Great had the architect who designed St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow blinded so that he could not design a rival. She adds, 'The tradition of rewarding originality by punishment is an old one here... This century, the principle had been democratically extended to include not just originality, but initiative of any kind. Hydra-headed, the tsars too had proliferated since the Revolution: every little boss had his own realm now, into which no higher authority seemed to penetrate'.

Her travels and friendships allowed her to comment on other aspects of Soviet life. The sheer ugliness of so much of modern life could be overwhelming: of course the Soviet Union, like the United States, is a society which is still settling a continent and cannot afford the tidiness that marks English life. Even so, 'The slovenliness might be Russian, but the relentless ugliness that covered this country like mould, that was Soviet'. She discusses in touching manner the plight of the very young and the very old, the way in which people had been worn down by totalitarianism, the role of the Church in the new world being created, the difficulties of reform, the memories of past horrors perpetrated by the thugs who took over the old Russian Empire.

Most absorbing of all, perhaps, is the plight of those who think, admittedly a minority in any country. In Russia these people face a terrible dilemma: they are now discovering that not only had the Communist emperor never had clothes but that he was a mis-shapen and ugly monster underneath. How individual people cope with this disillusionment is a theme of the book. One remembers the words of a dancer named Vika: 'It's very hard for me to live now. You see, I used to believe in it all... I was one of the masses, marching cheerfully in step! Yes, I was one of them. And then we discover that everything, everything we believed in was a lie. It hurts so much, because I believed in my heart'. It reminds us, if we needed reminding, that the Russian people deserved better, much better.

JAMES MUNSON

THE SUEZ ECHO

Suez. Keith Kyle. Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 656pp. £25.00.

It is 35 years since Suez and Keith Kyle's detailed record has come at the right moment because this year's action against Saddam Hussein of Iraq recalls, almost inevitably, the actions by Britain, France and Israel against Colonel Nasser of Egypt, the same complex efforts to involve and activate onlookers, the same doubts about what had been done and what ought to have been done.

The author's efforts are impressive. He gives a detailed account of the diplomatic moves launched rather hastily to set up a scene that would placate what was then the powerful Third World led by Nehru and to lower American resistance. There is a detailed and fascinating account of the dissensions in the British Cabinet and in Washington where the Joint Chiefs of Staff urged active support for Britain and France. At Number Ten the changes of stance and atmosphere, the often offensive criticisms of Anthony Eden, made by his closest advisers are reported. The author, quite rightly, stresses too that Eden

was a really sick man and that other main players, like Dulles, the wily US Secretary of State, and Ben Gurion, the forceful Israeli leader, were also not well. His reports on dissensions in the Cabinet and the atmosphere in which the fatal decision to accept the Eisenhower-Dulles inspired ceasefire, with Eden's courageous and pathetic remark that he couldn't 'go on', makes one wish that we would all be around when the 30 years ban on Mrs. Thatcher's Cabinet discussions expires — in the next century!

One of the most fascinating morsels the author has dug up is the remark the German Chancellor at the time, Konrad Adenauer, made when he signed the first agreement with France on setting up the Common Market which accidentally happened when the furious French government had to agree to halt the advance southward from Port Said, as the British had, because of American pressure. The European Economic Community Treaty was, Adenauer said, 'the revenge against America'.

The author reports, like others, that Harold Macmillan played a key role in getting Eden to stop the advance along the Suez Canal. Macmillan, at first an enthusiastic supporter of Eden's Suez action, insisted at the crucial Cabinet meeting that Britain had to agree to call off the action since otherwise Sterling would collapse since the Americans had refused to help at the IMF. One third of the total currency reserves had been lost and the Sterling Area would disintegrate. However, the detailed account given of the military action makes it quite plain that holding on for a few days more to reach the Southern End of the Canal would have brought success. But the nerves at Number Ten broke in November 1956 just as they did 35 years later.

The author condemns the Suez action as folly and he plainly states that Colonel Nasser was the winner and Anthony Eden the deserved loser. Suez was the last attempt of Britain to act as a great power. Britain ought to have agreed to try an arrangement with Nasser on the running of the Canal similar to that made after Suez. But it is clear from the author's story that Nasser only made the later agreement because the British, French and Israelis were still there, able to act. In the actual negotiations he succeeded in humiliating Britain. Again, the whole story of SCUA, the Suez Canal Users Association, dreamed up by Secretary Dulles recorded in the book shows that Nasser wanted, and achieved an image victory despite the risk of defeat at the Canal and proclaimed the outcome as a triumph of anti-Colonialism.

The author does not get very far in enlightening us about the real motives of Eisenhower's and Dulles's determination to wreck the Suez effort. Eisenhower was certainly determined to show that even in the weeks before his second election he was strong enough to stop the Israelis. But there is also the feeling that he was determined that Britain and France could not be allowed to act as if they were Great Powers. The account of the unpleasant tension between US and British officials negotiating the details of the withdrawal shows that.

The author does not touch on some of the results of Suez. The failure of Britain and France to get American support was most strongly felt in France. The French wanted Nasser removed because they saw him, rightly, as the main psychological support of the independence movement in Algeria. The defeat of the Fourth Republic brought Algerian aggressive Third World Independence and de Gaulle's return to power with all its consequences like the French withdrawal from the essential military sector of NATO and the rejection of Britain's first entry effort to the Common Market. It also resulted, and this is often forgotten, in Britain and France not going all the way with the US

in Vietnam. One cannot say, though, that the result may have been different.

Just as President Bush announced that he wanted the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, Eden and Mollet, the French Premier, indicated openly that they wanted the removal of Nasser. But the Egyptian leader emerged stronger after Suez just as Saddam has visibly survived. Again, at the time of Suez, and the author touches on this, the Soviet Union was a major and aggressive force in the Middle East and one of the reasons for Eisenhower's and Dulles's opposition was the fear that Suez, if successfully pursued, might trigger off World War III.

Seen from all angles, Keith Kyle has produced a very useful account of what is bound to remain a hotly argued issue, especially because of the fascinating parallels with Iraq.

LEO MURAY

SIXTEENTH CENTURY VERSE

The New Oxford Book of Sixteenth Century Verse, chosen and edited by Emrys Jones. xxxix + 767pp. Oxford University Press. £25.00.

The Oxford anthologies of verse are being renewed. Now E. K. Chambers's 1932 anthology is replaced. A radically different selection was to be expected after all that has been written about the century during the past sixty years, and the expectation is not disappointed.

It is a very large book, as it needs to be to present a sample of a very large amount of verse by a large number of people. Its size relieves the pressure anthologists always feel to prefer short self-sufficient poems. Professor Jones has been able to select longer items than previous anthologies have done. Poems far too long to be included are represented by well-chosen extracts fairly complete in themselves and illustrating the styles of the works from which they are taken.

An anthology such as this is a review of literary history. But simplified literary history has often misled anthologists by marking off periods and labelling them with their predominant movements. The sixteenth century is the age of the New Poetry, the seventeenth the era of metaphysical poetry. But the New Poetry, after a premature outburst in the thirties, only established itself in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and Donne, the leader of the metaphysicals, was nearly thirty when the century ended. Professor Jones will have none of the playing about with boundaries historians and anthologists have indulged in. Whatever was written between 1500 and 1600 has been eligible for selection.

Literary merit has not been the only criterion for selection. Every item has some interest, but sometimes it is because of the writer or the circumstances in which it was written. People then seem to have found the expression of strong feeling easier in verse than in prose. For the most part, however, the book is a sample of what people read — or heard: for many people songs were their chief experience of verse, and not only the music books but the broadsides are represented here.

The chronological order of the contents is itself revealing. We appreciate the tenacity of mediaeval traditions in the first half of the century. There is even a poem on the Battle of Flodden in alliterative metre. The originality of Wyatt and Surrey is acknowledged, and there is a glimpse of the barren quarter of a century after their early deaths. The subsequent splendour of the last two decades of the century occupies two-thirds of the volume and is

displayed in all its rich variety. Several features of it are brought out more clearly than has been usual. One is the number of influential translations. Another is the verse of persecuted Catholics, whose work is now rescued from manuscripts. This excellent anthology is enlightening in all sorts of ways.

BRUCE PATTISON

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

The Infection of Thomas De Quincey: a Psychopathology of Imperialism. John Barrell. Yale University Press, 1991. £18.95.

This book is a discussion of the way the Orient is presented in Thomas De Quincey's writings. The author of *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* was one of those writers whose social and racial paranoia grew out of the same hidden recesses of the psyche as their most striking creative achievement and in studying such individuals one needs to decide if the focus of interest is the phenomenon of social and racial paranoia, or the hidden recesses of the psyche, or artistic achievement. Professor Barrell gives a startling account of De Quincey's proto-Blimpish prejudices but is evidently unfamiliar with the large corpus of scholarly work that already exists on the subject of racial paranoia, whether as regards Asians, Negroes, Jews or the Irish. He also seems to have little perception of how far the British position in India and the Far East changed and how far racial stereotypes hardened between the conclusion of the Mahratta War in 1805 when De Quincey was 20, and the defeat of the Indian Mutiny and the establishment of the direct authority of the British Crown in India in 1858 when De Quincey was 73. Professor Barrell gives a more convincing performance on the theme of the recesses of De Quincey's psyche, though of course he gets a lot of help in this from De Quincey himself. With regard to the creative achievement of his subject, Professor Barrell never quite faces up to the fact that De Quincey's writing, while consistently over-ornate and over-blown, varies in quality from the brilliantly original to the embarrassingly derivative and third-rate. But it does not seem that the weaknesses in Professor Barrell's exposition are mere oversight.

Professor Barrell seems to be an exponent of what in America is called the New Historicism. The New Historicism at its most innocuous is a kind of revamping of the style of belle-lettristic literary criticism of three generations ago: at its worst it seems an attempt by professors who have discredited English Literature as a scholarly discipline to see if they can do the same for History. The standard characteristics of this brand of contemporary scholarship are frequent reference to Sigmund Freud, convolution in the organization of arguments, flaunting arbitrariness in the selection of facts, and hermetic titles. Professor Barrell's chapter headings alone will make *The Infection of Thomas De Quincey* a classic of the genre.

Though Professor Barrell notes the link between opium and the Orient (p.17) he has surprisingly little to say about De Quincey's opium addiction and its relationship to his paranoia about orientals or to his development as a writer or as a human being. Opium-taking is of course central not only to De Quincey's most important work, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, but to his life as a whole. Massive drug abuse over a period of years cannot be regarded as marginal and incidental, like the amputation of a toe or a single isolated attempt at shop-lifting: it is inseparable from all the causes and effects of the drug taker's personality and relationships. De Quincey is as much

an example of this as Coleridge. Professor Barrell's reticence on the subject of De Quincey's opium abuse and its effect on his imaginative processes may of course be an acknowledgement of his ignorance regarding drugs: he follows Robert Percival, author of *An Account of the Island of Ceylon* (1803) in supposing that *bhang* is the same as opium, even though Percival claims that what he calls 'bang' comes from 'a small shrub, with a leaf in shape and texture resembling that of the tobacco, but not larger than the leaf of the sage'. Opium, as every Sussex undergraduate knows, comes from a type of poppy: Percival's description (in a passage immediately preceding one quoted at length by Professor Barrell) seems to refer to hemp, which is the plant *bhang* comes from, though his suggestion that hemp leaves resemble a smaller version of tobacco suggests that, like so many other British travellers in the East, Percival simply did not know what he was talking about.

The issue of opium versus hemp, or *bhang*, or hashish as we now generally term it, is of interest in relation to *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. In 1822 Robert Gooch, MD, suggested in *The Quarterly Review* that De Quincey's account of the effects of opium was misleading (*QR*, volume 27, page 122). In 1850 David Urquhart, MP for Stafford and the first man to attempt to grow hemp in England for the purpose of intoxication, claimed in his book *The Pillars of Hercules* that De Quincey's famous opium visions were in fact hashish visions (volume 2, page 135). This is also the opinion of most people I know who have made themselves familiar with the effects of both opium and hashish during the last twenty years. Of course De Quincey never mentions hashish in *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* but this is not very surprising: he was trying to make money by writing a sensational narrative, and while opium was a familiar and increasingly notorious drug in 1821, hashish was still scarcely known in England. In 1803 Coleridge had tried to obtain some hashish from Wordsworth's brother John, who was captain of an East Indiaman: eventually he acquired a quantity from Sir Joseph Banks, botanist and president of the Royal Society. This was before Coleridge met De Quincey, of course. Banks's stock had almost certainly been sent to him by Helenus Scott, MD, then a doctor in Bombay. In mid-1821 when De Quincey was living in London and writing *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, Scott was established in medical practice in Russell Square, in the house now occupied by the British Museum's Education Service. I have been unable to establish any direct link between the two men. I had rather hoped Professor Barrell's book would shed new light on this matter: but I find it sheds new light on very little.

A. D. HARVEY

THE GOLDEN YEARS OF CINEMA

The Great Movie Stars: The Independent Years. David Shipman. Macdonald. £19.95.

With this third volume of *The Great Movie Stars* David Shipman undoubtedly brings down the curtain on what has been a lifetimes work. Not for a minute does that mean his lifespan is short — although his eyesight must have been weakened by the hundreds of thousands of hours sat in the darkness or in front of the television. It simply means there are no more stars for him to cover for his all comprehensive work. Over the years his first two volumes, *The Golden Years* and *The International Years*, have been updated and unfortunate earlier omissions such as Randolph Scott have been corrected. Now *The Independent Years* brings us up to date with potted biographies and

more importantly accurate, if sometimes acid, commentary on the performances of today's much more ephemeral stars. Originally he set out to feature 100 actors and actresses and stopped at 92. They are all there from Alan Alda to the maybe less than star quality James Wods. Perhaps the only criticism is that he could have thrown in another eight continental stars but that criticism is probably more directed at the publishers and the public who are unfamiliar with the talented actors of the French screen such as Daniel Allegret. Nor will his comments meet with everyone's approval although few can disagree with his quote by Cher of Meryl Streep that she was 'an acting machine in the sense that a shark is a killing machine'.

That is one of the charms of the book. There is something with which you can argue on every page. But whether you agree that the reason why Jeff Bridges has never won the acclaim he deserves is because of his deceptive ease or that Daryl Hannah is '... the other Hollywood blonde. The one who looks like Kim Basinger. Or is at the other way round?', there can be little disagreement that this book is the best of its kind by the longest of margins.

Fans of David Shipman need not despair. There is no reason why he cannot start all over again with the Great Directors. Ready Mr. Griffiths?

JAMES MORTON

SHORTER REVIEWS

The European Communities Encyclopedia and Directory 1992. £155. Europa Publications Ltd. This is a new and ambitious publication which seeks to provide in a single volume of approximately 400 large pages 'a comprehensive guide to the European Communities, both as they operate today in the context of world affairs and in a historical perspective'. Professor Derek Urwin is responsible for the A-Z of the European Communities and has brought together a wealth of information. There are also Essays on the European Communities. These cover Political Framework by David Millar and William E. Paterson, the Legal Framework by John Usher, the Economic Framework by Simon Bulmer, the Social Framework by Emil J. Kirchner, the Framework for 1992 by Ian Barnes and the External Relations of the European Communities by Michael Smith. There is also a wide ranging Statistical Survey of the European Communities, and a directory on each institution of the Communities. All in all, this volume seeks to provide a wealth of relevant information which should be of great value, particularly to workers in the European field, which is subject to changes. These are inevitable and it is clearly of the utmost importance for this volume to be kept up to date. This is the first edition. Are there to be frequent new editions or regular supplements?

Rude Words. Macmillan. £17.50. This year the London Library celebrates the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding under the strong influence of Thomas Carlyle. John Wells, the actor and writer, has written a delightful account of the Library during these years, of its great reputation as a literary centre and of many of the celebrities who used it. He brings it alive with a humorous touch and a lively graphic description of events.

Eve and the New Jerusalem. Virago Press. £10.99. This latest reprint of Barbara Taylor's study of 'socialism and feminism in the nineteenth century' is welcome. It is of particular interest in relation to the Owenite movement and the struggle of women for recognition and acceptance in what was a man's world.

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Contents

		Page
Maastricht is the Question	Leo Muray	225
The Nature of Regional Conflict: A Review of 1990 — Part Five: Pure Regional Conflicts	Stephen Chan and Jonathan Alner	230
Rebirth of a Nation? Mongolia's Reincarnated Religious Leader	Paul C. Woy	234
The End of Nation States?	Nigel M. Healey	242
Hong Kong: Paying the Price for Britain's Mistakes	Paul Mackintosh	248
Challenging Racism with the Scottish Police	Emil Rado	252
The Ghosts of Versailles and Oxford	James Munson	254
World Theatre in London	Laurence Green	259
Poem: Simone Weil (1909-1943)	J. D. Mallinson	262
Lloyd George and Winston Churchill: Contrasts and Similarities	Curtis Arthur Amlund	263
'Night & Day': A Contribution to Literary History	Richard Pennington	267
The Train	Sarah Sallon	270
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT		273
Leo Muray, Esmond Wright, Molly Mortimer, A. D. Harvey, Molly Tibbs.		
Shorter Reviews		280

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MAASTRICHT IS THE QUESTION

by Leo Muray

THE Prime Minister, Mr. Major, as well as Mr. Chris Patten, the Conservative Party Chairman, and Mr. Garel-Jones, the EC Minister at the Foreign Office, have now said rather definitely that Britain will sign a revised Rome Treaty and additional treaties setting up Economic and Political Union. The drafts for those treaties submitted by the Brussels Commission are therefore likely to form the substance of the EC Summit discussions in Maastricht, Holland, in December. At present groups of selected officials of all 12 member countries are trying to work out a final draft. It will not be easy to come to definite conclusions. The draft is a 101 page document going through every paragraph of the Rome Treaty and there are another 22 pages setting out the main proposals for the new treaties on Political Union and on Defence and Security. The documents are published in the 10 languages of the 12 EC member countries. When going paragraph by paragraph through the Rome Treaty it leaves some unchanged. Significantly, the section that has established the present CAP, Common Agricultural Policy, is left unchanged, a blank. This because the authors know that no agreement on changes is so far in sight. This because the reforms proposed, and resentfully fought for by the Commission, have not been accepted.

If EC economics are to be integrated in a radically revised Rome Treaty agricultural reform is essential. Influential sources suggest that the treaties on Political Union and on Economic Union are not likely to be signed by all governments, or if signed, some Parliaments may refuse to ratify them. There is also, of course, the fair chance that some Parliaments will send back the treaties for getting the changes accepted they will demand. The present arguments have brought out the North-South divide. Spain, for instance, was paid less than half the farming subsidies Holland received in 1989. There is the conflict between the mass producers, like Holland, France, Denmark, and to a certain extent Britain, and Spain, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, whose small farmers would benefit most from direct grants, while British or Dutch farmers would have to cut their production drastically.

The reforms proposed by the Brussels Commission would have small farmers not earn enough but get grants while large farmers would not be competitive and would also need support from Brussels.

Another question-mark against easy success at Maastricht is the hold-up in the ongoing negotiations with the EFTA, European Free Trade Area, countries on the setting up of a European Economic Area, EEA. The unresolved issues there are: fishing rights and the substantial aid the EC is asking the EFTA countries to grant to Eastern European countries, as an entrance fee, so to speak. Again, two key EFTA countries, Austria and Sweden, are candidates for EC membership. Austria's application has already been accepted in principle, to be properly worked out in detail once the new EC treaties are in force. Added to this is the fervently expressed desire of the East European countries to become members some time as well.

The proposed treaty document states that 'any European state' can apply for membership. Admission requires the unanimous vote of the European Council, made up, of course, of Minister-delegates of the 12 members. An absolute majority of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, not just a simple majority vote with abstentions not counted, is required as well. Here the recent demand of German members that the number of German MEPs should be increased because of the increase in the German population due to unification comes in. At present Germany, Britain, France and Italy have 81 members each. The increase demanded would add perhaps 18 members to the German contingent, making it the strongest. The Maastricht Summit will somehow have to deal with this and, even more so, with regulations for associate membership for some of the applicants.

The Soviet Union is a most delicate subject. Is it a 'European State' reaching over eleven time zones from the Finnish border to the Pacific Ocean? The Yugoslav crisis has produced another, quite unexpected, problem that of recognition of Slovenia, a Greater Serbia or the Baltic states. This goes to the core of the treaty that is to provide the framework for a EC foreign policy. Would it be laid down that recognition of a newly independent state must be unanimous, that is that no member government must on its own recognize such a new entity?

The General Provisions in the treaty draft lists the issues that can be given the 'joint action priority' that the treaty introduces. They are topical ones like 'transfer of military technology to third countries and the control of arms exports or involvement in peace-keeping operations in the UN context'. In the list are also 'relations with the USSR' and 'transatlantic relations'. This is the codeword for relations with the US and Canada. Among other things it raises the question of Britain's role in the Commonwealth. The General Provisions in Article K raises the key issue about the new treaty.

Each member state should be bound by the joint line of action agreed on by the European Council and the Council may 'stipulate' that detailed arrangements for carrying out joint action 'shall be adopted by a qualified majority'. It should be 'ensured' that national policies are in line with agreed action and members should 'refrain' from any action contrary to the interests of the Union or likely to impair the EC's effectiveness as a

'cohesive force in international relations'. Member governments must observe the policy laid down by the European Council in guidelines unanimously adopted. Members can report to the Council if there are cases where consistency has not been observed.

The Strasbourg Parliament will be kept informed and consulted on the main lines of the common Foreign — and Security — Policy. There is to be a Political Committee made up of top officials of political departments. They will have the task of working with the Brussels Commission and formulate opinions as well as monitoring the situation in all areas of the foreign — and security — policy. The list of objectives and issues to be covered by the proposed joint policy covers practically all the subjects the London G7 Summit laid down as its areas of joint policy. This will become an even more delicate and controversial issue once the US government has made real progress in its policy to create a North American Economic Union made up of Mexico as well as Canada and the US. It is significant that there is no mention of the Commonwealth in the drafts. It will, therefore, require tough decisions by Britain to preserve the 'special relationship' with the US. The codeword 'transatlantic relations' suggests that the Brussels Commission wants the new treaty to provide the mechanics for changing that relationship.

The main text reforming and revising the Rome Treaty itself, starts with laying down the task to organize, according to the principles of consistency and solidarity, the relations among 'Member States and their peoples'. Then it says that 'the Treaty marks a new stage in a process leading gradually to a Union with a federal goal'. This is what originally disturbed Mr. Major. Even a casual reading of the draft shows that whatever terms Mr. Major may succeed in eliminating, a robust federal union is intended. This is made very plain in the Final Provisions that state bluntly that there should be a conference in 1996 'to strengthen the federal character of the Union'. This shows that the reform of the Rome Treaty is designed to bring about that Union and every government taking part in the revision of the Rome Treaty is assumed to support this.

Illuminating proof of this is the draft Article 198a and following. It establishes a 'committee of the Regions attached to the Economic and Social Committee'. It is to advise that Commission. It is made up of 199 members ranging from 24 for the Big Four (Britain, France, Germany, Italy) to 6 for Luxembourg. The European Council appoints them by unanimous vote. Members are to be 'completely independent' and act 'in the general interest of the Community'. They will therefore play a similar role as the Brussels Commission itself. The Regional Committee can submit an opinion independently where it considers regional interests are involved. There is here a new inherently federal force alongside the Commission that can bypass the national units in the Community if regional interests were to conflict with national ones. Member governments will nominate two for every post and the Council will pick them.

This new Committee must be seen against the provision that creates Union Citizenship. 'Every person holding the nationality of a Member

State shall be a citizen of the Union.' Every Union citizen shall have the right to move freely and reside within member states territory, and the European Council on the proposal of the Commission and with the assent of the Strasbourg Parliament can act, only unanimously, to facilitate the exercise of these rights. This will include voting and being candidates in municipal elections as from 1994. But member states may apply for 'derogations' through the Commission consulting, the Strasbourg Parliament and obtaining the unanimous approval of the Council.

The key element of the Draft Treaty is the establishment of the 'European Community' in order 'to promote throughout the Community a harmonious and balanced development of economic activities, sustainable and non-inflationary growth, respecting the environment, a high degree of convergence of economic performance'. A list of 21 major activities is given setting out the scope of the new policy including a system to prevent distortion of competition, strengthening of the competitiveness of the Community's industries and a European Social Fund. There is to be an Ombudsman and equal wages for men and women is made obligatory.

Areas of the Community's 'exclusive jurisdiction' are outlined and the principle of 'subsidiarity' is introduced for areas outside it. The Community, that is in practice the Brussels Commission balanced by the European Council, shall only take action in these 'outside' areas if and insofar those objectives can be better achieved by the Community than by member states acting separately because of the scale or effects of the proposed action'. It is not said who decides on 'subsidiarity' but it is implied it will be the Commission. Thus a federal system with the traditional bias in favour of Centralism in the ancient French fashion is implied.

Decisive powers in monetary, economic and social policies are to be given to the Council and Commission with a carefully tuned balancing practice between the two implied.

Therefore a 'European System of Central Banks, ESCB', is to be set up as well as a European Investment Bank. The 'framework of a system of markets' is to be set up 'based on the close co-ordination of Member States' economic policies. This shall 'include the irrevocable fixing of exchange rates' between members' currencies and the 'introduction of a single currency', the ECU. The 'overriding objectives' are to be price stability and support of the general economic policy of the Community. The use of the term 'irrevocable' shows that the freedom of action of governments in any situation of monetary difficulties is to be abolished, in political terms. The draft also deals with budgets of member states. Budget deficits are to be avoided and the performance of member governments will be monitored. In urgent situations the Community will be entitled to seek the adoption of action in a member state.

Overall, the Union Treaty envisages joint and detailed policies in practically every sector of economic life and in most sections of the social system. Again, once the Union is established, the President of the Council and the Commission, both with enlarged powers and responsibilities, will represent all member countries on the international scene while at the

same time having the right to monitor the performance and activities of member governments. Both will be supplied with funds determined by regulations and negotiations with member governments. Britain's position here is unique since it has no Constitution. The new Union Treaty would go a long way towards providing such. This makes Britain's position potentially more vulnerable.

Yet, the Union Treaty is by no means assured. New uncertainties are arising. Germany is now in real difficulties because of the unexpected rise in the expense for bringing East Germany up to the standard of the old Federal Republic. The proposed Banking System is now in question and with it the idea of an 'irrevocable' exchange rate system. The continuing Yugoslav crisis and the goings on in the Middle East are exposing the enormous difficulties of working out a common foreign policy and what is more, putting it into practice. The efforts the EC Council has engaged in to sort out the Yugoslav war shows that events have forced the EC to exercize in practice the right to intervene in what was at the start the internal affairs of a European country, something not touched upon or foreseen in the draft. To this has to be added the obvious problem of agreeing on what convergence of economic conditions really means in practical terms. Yet it is of vital importance that the details and implications of a Union Treaty are being looked at and discussed freely and the suggestion that any searching questions put on any of the hundreds of political and practical issues implied in the Draft Treaty is 'anti-European' must be rejected. It is better if Maastricht produces no results than a 'Europhiliac' arrangement on paper that cannot survive.

The Parliaments of the 12 member states will have to ratify the revised treaty and the two additions. Since the 12 member states have different constitutions the treaty, as sponsored by the Brussels Commission which favours the extension of majority vote, is likely to require changes in the constitutions of several members. The Dutch attempt to introduce a whole new draft treaty, now abandoned in mutual embarrassment, is another unexpected event as are the Anglo-Italian and Franco-German openly conflicting moves on key issues of policy. For a long time uncertainty will prevail while conditions around the whole issue will continue to change.

THE NATURE OF REGIONAL CONFLICT: A REVIEW OF 1990 — PART FIVE: PURE REGIONAL CONFLICTS

by Stephen Chan and Jonathan Alner

THESE are conflicts of regional interest and consequence, but which have never involved the superpowers in any active or intervening fashion. They have involved, however, conflict between two regional powers — as in Kashmir, which has brought India and Pakistan into moments of great tension. They have involved single, dominant regional powers exerting their agendas over those of others — as India has done in Sri Lanka, although that particular dispute, between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil Tigers, has become again largely localised, notwithstanding Rajiv Ghandi's death. Even so, India has continued to view developments in Sri Lanka with great interest. The interest of China in Tibet falls somewhat outside the framework established by India and Sri Lanka since, legally, Tibet now forms part of China. But the suppression of liberties and agitation there has entered international consciousness — not sufficiently for any power or group of powers to act, since Tibet is not seen as worth the price of alienating China.

Upheaval in Liberia spurred west African states to assemble a peacekeeping force to intervene between the opposing factions. This was the second African peacekeeping force, the first having been a failed effort at peacekeeping in Chad in 1980. Ten years later, the effort in Liberia has been bogged down in the violence, with the peacekeeping force, having abandoned at an early stage any semblance of being a neutral third party, becoming a participating actor in the conflict itself. The idea that there might be an African solution to an African problem has not borne fruit as yet in Liberia. But Liberia, not being strategic to the interests of any non-African power, has not attracted any other intervention. If the African peacekeeping force cannot contain the conflict there, no one else will and it looks set to continue.

The conflict in Liberia remains unresolved in 1991, and the African peacekeeping force has had little success to report. Indeed, the conflict has spilled over into Sierra Leone as rebel groups have crossed borders to provision themselves and seek safer base or transit areas. In the chronologies that follow, however, we have restricted ourselvse to giving a full year's account of conflict in Sri Lanka and Kashmir. This seems appropriate to us as we prepared these materials after the death of Rajiv Ghandi. Violence continued in Sri Lanka with no pause for negotiations. Pakistan and India talked from time to time over Kashmir, but to no effect.

Sri Lanka

1. 1.90 Tigers start to take over in north and east as Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) leaves.
4. 1.90 Rival Tamil groups fight. 50 killed.

28. 1.90 IPKF leaves Jaffna, which falls to Tigers.
1. 2.90 Tamil gunmen kill 5 Muslim hospital patients and abduct 10.
1. 3.90 Northeast Provincial Council renames itself the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Eelam.
14. 3.90 Tigers take Trincomalee.
1. 4.90 Tiger leader, Velupillai Prabakaran, turns up alive and says the Tigers will not lay down their arms.
18. 4.90 Sri Lankan leader, Premadasa, eases emergency regulations.
19. 4.90 Government says it will cease offensive operations against Sinhalese People's Liberation Front.
8. 5.90 Sam Tambimuttu, M.P. and human rights activist, assassinated.
28. 5.90 Second round of talks held between government and Tigers.
7. 6.90 Soldier killed and several wounded in clashes with Tigers near Vavuniya.
11. 6.90 10 soldiers killed in ambush near Kalmunai.
8 policemen killed in mortar attack on Kalmunai police station.
12. 6.90 Tigers and government agree to ceasefire.
13. 6.90 90 policemen killed in Tiger attack. 600 policemen captured. Ceasefire ignored.
15. 6.90 Fighting intensifies in northeast.
18. 6.90 Civil war officially declared.
19. 6.90 13 moderate leaders of Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front killed in Madras. Tigers blamed.
India rules out fresh intervention.
22. 6.90 Tigers accused of killing 62 Muslims they believed were government informers.
26. 6.90 80 Tamils believed to be Tigers or supporters killed in Kalmunai.
29. 6.90 Estimated 1,679 killed since fighting recommenced on 11.6.90.
29 6.90 Mass grave of 14 policemen found near Trincomalee. 600 policemen still missing.
9. 7.90 Government claims 50 rebels killed in two operations.
13. 7.90 Tigers overrun Kokkavil military base. 45 soldiers and 18 rebels killed.
15. 7.90 168 Muslims killed in Batticaloa region.
18. 7.90 95 Tigers and 8 soldiers killed in government offensive near Vavuniya.
20. 7.90 Mass grave of 110 policemen found in Ampara.
24. 7.90 Troops re-take Paranthan.
25. 7.90 Troops re-take Kilnochchi where 150 soldiers were under siege for six weeks.
26. 7.90 35 Sinhalese civilians killed by Tigers in three incidents.
7. 8.90 Troops kill 42 Tigers held responsible for massacring Muslim villagers.
12. 8.90 Tigers kill at least 144 Muslim civilians in Batticaloa and Amparai.
14. 8.90 85 Tamil villagers killed by Muslims.
24. 8.90 100 rebels killed in helicopter attack near Jaffna.
29. 8.90 Further 34 killed as above.
2. 9.90 Tiger attack on Jaffna fort repulsed. 26 rebels killed.
7. 9.90 Another attack on Jaffna fort.
10. 9.90 Estimated 930,000 refugees in 410 refuge centres.
13. 9.90 Siege on Jaffna fort broken by government troops.
20. 9.90 40 Sinhalese villagers killed by Tigers at Vellamundel.
26. 9.90 Tigers claim they re-captured Jaffna fort, but government says their troops withdrew.
20.10.90 Kattuwan, a Tamil town, is retaken by Sri Lankan troops.
22.10.90 Mavaddipuram taken from Tamils. 20 rebels and 3 soldiers die after fighting an eight hour battle.
27.10.90 World Bank says Sri Lanka to receive $1bn in aid in 1991.
28.10.90 EC delegation arrives to investigate human rights violations.
7.11.90 Report released by European Parliament claims 60,000 killed or disappeared in Sri Lanka in past three years.
26.11.90 Tigers claim to have taken Mankulam, an army stronghold, after several days of fierce fighting.
27.11.90 100 troops and 200 Tigers reported killed in above.
12.12.90 Tigers accuse Sri Lankan army of killing 76 Tamil civilians in a village in the east of the country.
31.12.90 Tigers call a unilateral ceasefire, starting at midnight.
2. 1.91 Army ordered to stop offensives against rebels.
11. 1.91 Tigers ask for the 7-day ceasefire to be extended.

12. 1.91 Government calls off the truce saying the Tigers violated it 30 times in the 7 days.

Kashmir

8. 1.90 8 Muslims die in rioting in 4 major towns in Kashmir Valley.
15. 1.90 India accuses Pakistan of backing militants.
21. 1.90 25 killed and 60 wounded.
25. 1.90 Near complete censorship of the press.
26. 1.90 9 killed and 40 wounded when troops opened fire on crowd which attacked a food truck in Handawor.
2 2.90 4 killed and 8 wounded in Sopose when troops opened fire on crowd chanting anti-Indian slogans.
5. 2.90 Indian troops fire on Pakistanis trying to cross the border into India. 2 killed and 12 injured.
8. 2.90 2 members of Border Security Force killed in Srinagar.
12. 2.90 Indian officials claim Pakistani troops fired on Indian security forces after Indians opened fire on Pakistanis crossing the border.
19. 2.90 Governor of the state dissolves the state legislature opening the way for elections later in the year.
20. 2.90 Pakistani and Indian troops exchange fire for several hours.
23. 2.90 40,000 Muslims march on UN Military Observer Group in Srinagar.
1. 3.90 29 killed and 33 wounded when Indian troops opened fire on pro-independence crowds.
11. 3.90 Pakistan declares it is against creation of independent state.
25. 3.90 Kidnapped politician, Mir Ghulan Mustafa, found dead in Srinagar.
26. 3.90 Bhutto promises £33m aid for struggle.
29. 3.90 12 Muslims killed by troops in Srinagar.
30. 3.90 10 killed crossing into Pakistan-controlled area of Kashmir.
12. 4.90 6 killed when Indian and Pakistani troops exchange fire.
17. 4.90 8 Kashmiri militant groups banned.
25. 4.90 Indian and Pakistani Foreign Ministers agree to reduce tension and avoid confrontation in meeting in New York.
9. 5.90 10 killed in street-fighting in Srinagar.
11 5.90 100 suspected militants arrested in Kashmir following house-to-house searches.
17. 5.90 V. P. Singh says he will not accept third party mediation.
21. 5.90 Indian troops fire on 100,000 mourners, killing 80 to 100 and wounding 300.
25. 5.90 Governor of Jammu and Kashmir resigns. Replaced by Girish Saxena.
5. 6.90 India starts withdrawing troops from border area.
7. 6.90 Pakistan offers talks to discuss reduction of threat of war.
18. 6.90 Rebels announce they will set up a provisional government to represent Kashmiris living under Indian occupation.
4. 7.90 Indians arrest leader of a separatist group and uncover arms cache.
18. 7.90 2-day talks begin.
India imposes direct rule on Kashmir.
23. 7.90 Indian troops kill 13 Muslims as they try to cross into India.
29. 7.90 Indian troops ambush militants, killing 12.
6 8.90 Indian troops capture chief military commander and 11 pro-independence members.
12. 8.90 Second round of talks ends in stalemate.
14. 8.90 13 killed by troops when they tried to put Pakistani flags on government buildings.
21. 8 90 Artillery fire exchanged by India and Pakistan.
3. 9.90 Indian troops set fire to shops in Sopore in reprisal for grenade attack.
11. 9.90 Indian troops fire on bus suspected of carrying rebels. 21 killed.
21. 9.90 Indian and Pakistani troops clash after Pakistani troops tried to cross into Kashmir.
26. 9.90 Indian troops kill 11 separatists and capture 32.
3.10.90 Indian paramilitary police raze the town of Handwara and kill at least 15 people in revenge for the killing of a colleague.
6.10.90 India accuses Pakistan of 'unprovoked and heavy shelling' along Kashmir border.
15.10.90 Mohammed Shaffi, a prominent pro-Indian political leader, is killed in one of five assassinations in Srinagar, Jamma and Kashmir.

8.11.90 Members of Hizbul Mujahideen, who want Kashmir to be part of Pakistan, launch rocket attack on security forces and Indian army in several parts of Kashmir valley.
17.11.90 Indian security forces claimed to be setting light to shops and houses in Kashmir, killing dozens of civilians.
22.11.90 12 Kashmiri Muslims killed on 21.11.90 by Indian border guards.
18.12.90 Indian and Pakistan Foreign Ministers meet in Islamabad but little progress expected.
21.12.90 India and Pakistan finalise an agreement to reduce tension. The agreement was signed in December 1988 but had to be ratified by both parliaments. It includes a ban on attacks on nuclear facilities.
26.12.90 Leader of Kashmir rebel faction rejects Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar's offer to negotiate.

Conclusion

In this survey we have suggested four types of regional conflict in 1990. This would be a rough and ready taxonomy to apply to the year 1990. but it conceals some underlying factors of great consequence to international relations beyond 1990. They are in a way epitomised by the communal uprisings of Trans-caucasia but are practised in their most deadly form by the Iraqs of this world. Pioneered in some force in the late twentieth century by Iran and its struggle against the US, it concerns the effect that indigenous cultural bases have on the formulation of foreign policies.

As the 34 nations met in Paris on 19 November 1990, signing away the Cold War, their meeting was likened to a second Vienna, a second Concert of Europe. In a concert, everyone recognises that there are rules in common. The late twentieth-century concert of east and west in Paris in a way culminates the thought and career of statesmen like Henry Kissinger who, all his life, sought to replicate what Vienna achieved. Marring this new achievement is regional strife in which the interests of all the metropolitan powers are implicated. Yet the conflict of the Gulf, in the minds of one of its chief instigators, Saddam Hussein, was conceived as a conflict of purely regional rationales and objectives. What the 34 nations of Paris are for is a new global order. What they are against is regional uprising against this new order. Saddam's is a challenge to what the 34 nations conceive to be the path to peace beyond 1990. It is a challenge which has been crushed, and it is a challenge which does not properly advertise something beyond Paris, beyond recollections of Vienna, and beyond the Gulf — and that is simply that the 34, in seeking a new global order, do not represent the globe. Those who are now the dispossessed of the globe, who starve and suffer in backwardness, who are the dark lands beyond the light of the 34, have also their own ambitions, aspirations and agendas. One day, at first in their regions, but perhaps with consequences beyond, they might also rise up and, on purely local rationales that are not meaningful to the new global order, destabilise it. As east embraces west, what is still needed is a language for the different Trans-caucasians of the world, beyond east and west, the north understanding the language of the south. Any new world order, or any attempts to mediate or intervene in regional conflicts will not succeed until this complex language is mastered.

REBIRTH OF A NATION? MONGOLIA'S REINCARNATED RELIGIOUS LEADER

by Paul C. Woy

BEFORE the Communist takeover in 1921 Mongolia had proclaimed its independence under the Bogd Khaan — 'Living Buddha' and Emperor — who inspired his subjects to take up arms for 'The Holy Imperial Mongol Nation'. But once their 'leading role' had been assured the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party portrayed the country's pre-revolutionary history as a period of feudal subjugation at the hands of the Manchus' self-serving agent — the 'Living Buddha'.

In 1990 the birth of political democracy opened the way for a reassessment of this role, and — while nationalism and religion are enjoying a revival after 70 years of suppression in the Soviet-backed regime — the Bogd's successor, exiled in India, has been invited to return.

At the entrance to the palace of the Bogd Gegeen Javtsandamba Khutagt, last god-king of Mongolia, stands the sacred iron hearth of the descendants of Genghiz Khaan. Beneath the great cauldron once burned the 'Mother Queen of Fire of the Nation', symbolic life-giver to all the fires of the Mongol clans.

Nearby a richly decorated 'ger' (round felt tent) stands testimony to the veneration once accorded the Khutagt: on the door swastikas and zoomorphic symbols intertwine, inside fine carpets, silks and brocades surround gleaming silver incense-burners and the vessels of Buddhist ritual, and over the intricately carved golden 'toono' (framework around the roof-opening) is draped a cover of snow-leopards furs.

At the death of the Khutagt's eighth incarnation in 1924 the Communist emasculation of the Church began — and it seemed the only man who could claim to be the focus and spiritual embodiment of the aspirations of Mongol nationalism had gone.

Mongol peoples today, as they have been for centuries, are found across a vast area of Central Asia divided by the arbitrary boundaries of their neighbours: those in the Mongolian People's Republic are outnumbered by others in northern China and the USSR, and there are Mongol speaking communities in Yunnan and Afghanistan as well as the related Kalmucks. Yet they all share a common sense of identity as the posterity of Genghiz Khaan — with a collective spirit which has led to acts of self-assertion even in the most unpromising circumstances.

Since ancient times, under the pervasive influence of an environment dominated by awesome expanses of sky and boundless steppe, the nomads of northern Asia found spiritual expression in Shamanism — the worship of natural phenomena via a mediator ('shaman') who through communication with appropriate spirits was expected to 'manipulate' nature. The Mongols' pantheism and the mystical rituals of Tibetan Buddhist liturgy which spread during the 17th century had much in common, and the new religion instinctively appealed to the fragmented tribes. However, while

gaining firm hold amongst them, Lamaism absorbed but never fully supplanted the Shamanist beliefs of its new adherents — an influence reflected in the institution of Javtsandamba Khutagt. As supreme head of the Faith, and provided with a lineal descent that included not only a discipline of Shakyamuni but also Genghiz Khaan himself, tales of the Khutagt's supernatural powers abounded.

The first incarnation, born in 1635, was rumoured to have made the pilgrimage from Urga (now Ulaanbaatar) to Lhasa in only seven days by transforming into a bird, on arrival bringing back to life a recently deceased Panchen Lama who subsequently lived to 120. The second reportedly caught the evil spirit responsible for smallpox, the fifth left his footprint in a block of granite, the seventh could stretch bows of enormous strength, and so on. Myths such as these flourished in the fertile imagination of the scattered Mongol tribes, and their devotion to the Khutagts grew throughout the centuries.

The French missionary priest Régis Huc travelling in Asia during the 1840s observed: '... the Guison Tamba [Javtsandamba] would have but to raise his finger, and all the Mongols, from the frontiers of Siberia to the extremities of Tibet, rising as one man, would precipitate themselves like a torrent wherever their sainted leader might direct them.' *(Travels in Tartary).*

The harsh rule of the Manchus, to whom the nobility of Khalkha (the present day MPR) had been forced to submit in 1691, was a cause of deep resentment in Mongolia. Legends of heroes who had raised the standard of rebellion were propagated by the mendicant lamas and storytellers who travelled the countryside, and became interwoven in folk consciousness with the deeds of past Khutagts. As a result, with the arrival of the 20th century and final disintegration of Manchu power in 1911, the anachronistic figure of the Eighth Javtsandamba Khutagt found himself surmounting a crescendo of nationalist sentiment and the ambitions of Pan-Mongolism — the reunification of all Mongol peoples in a single state.

A declaration to the Russian Foreign Ministry announced:

'We, the Khans and ruling princes, shall elevate unanimously the most universally respected "Bogd" as the Great Khaan. Then we shall establish a nation of our own.'

— and in December 1911 independence was proclaimed under:

'... the spreader of the religion, the saviour of all creatures, the sun-bright Bogd Khaan who is the supreme holder of power in church and state and has been elevated by all as the lord of the Mongol nation.'

Yet this ultimate symbol of authority and respect was in reality a debauched and wayward individual just as many of his equally venerated predecessors had been. 'Discovered' in a village at the foot of the Potala palace the Bogd's eighth incarnation — son of an adviser to the Dalai Lama — had lived in the claustrophobic atmosphere of the Mongolian court since his youth. By adolescence, the enervating monotony of his duties had become too much and his behaviour degenerated to sadistic pranks, drunkenness and a dissipated sexuality. Pozdneyev, a Russian academic in

Urga, bore witness:

'... the Khutagt would openly ride around the city in his merry-makings and frequently even raise an uproar on the streets: he would run into and trample people with his horse or set dogs on some pedestrian — this was the way in which the Khutagt ordinarily had his fun.'

An entire menagerie of exotic animals and birds, mechanical toys and wallclocks, musical instruments and firearms were provided then cast aside in the Khutagt's quest for amusement. A motor car was retained simply for the pleasure of giving electric shocks to his subjects, while another diversion was using kerosene to set alight the beard of an old lama. The Second Javtsandamba Khutagt similarly is known to have had men tied to the tails of galloping horses and thrown in fast-flowing rivers for enjoyment, and the whoring and homosexuality of several incarnations led to death from syphilis.

Yet none of these excesses could lessen the Mongol people's infatuated religious faith in the Bogd — every eccentricity was seen as a mystery, an omen for lamas to research in the sacred books then explain in his favour. Equally, being of Tibetan birth did nothing to lessen his potency as a rallying-point for Mongol nationalism — on the contrary, it gave him a neutral position amongst the Mongol Khans' competing claims of descent from Genghiz.

While his moral sense may have been questionable his political skill and ambition proved far beyond those of his contemporaries, and he quickly made use of his status to launch a liberation campaign in the name of 'Greater Mongolia'. A report in the *Times* of 30th June, 1913, from Kalgan — a gateway in the Great Wall only 114 miles from Beijing — states under the headline:

[Mongolian Independence Movement. Chinese Difficulties]

'Practically every male Mongol has left Kalgan for the interior, and it seems plain that the whole Mongol population of Northern Chih-Li [Hebei — the province surrounding Beijing] and Inner Mongolia is in active sympathy with the Mongolian movement... The Barguts [of North East China] have expelled all the Chinese officials and declared adherence to the Khutagt.'

In a two day battle to the north the Chinese, whose large army was equipped with 'several aeroplanes and boxes of explosives', lost nearly half their men and the Mongols declared their intention to capture Kalgan. The fighting continued into the winter — in a situation reminiscent of the campaigns of Genghiz Khaan the Chinese complained of the intense cold (to which the Mongols were inured) and the *North China Daily* reported:

'...It is very hard to capture the Mongolian cavalry, therefore it is impossible for the Chinese soldiers to fight them.'

It looked increasingly as though the victories his forces had achieved might turn the aims of the Khutagt's war of liberation into those of imperial conquest, but significantly it was a lack of modern arms and ammunition that prevented success from being sustained and relegated dreams of a 'Holy Imperial Mongol Nation' to the country's abundant

folklore. During the ensuing decade the Bogd Khaan was made painfully aware of the new forces at work in the 20th century, and — after his manipulation variously by white Russian renegades, Chinese war-lords and regional princes — it was ultimately the Soviet scheme to limit Chinese influence that decided the nation's fate for the next 70 years.

In July 1921 the Red Army seized an opportunity to help expel the savage White Guard, Baron Ungern-Sternberg, and instal a group of Mongol sympathisers at the seat of power, Urga — later renamed Ulaanbaatar ('Red Hero'). But the Mongol People's Party was by no means Communist at its inception, in fact troops of the 'revolutionary' leader Sükhbaatar composed a march song eulogising a mystical kingdom of Buddhist legend, Shambala — 'Let us all die in this war and be reborn as warriors of Shambal-in Khan' — hardly conforming with a movement intent on the Church's destruction.

In any case the strength of the Church at that time made it virtually unassailable. Beneath the Javtsandamba Khutagt, the zenith of Lamaist hierarchy, was a pyramid of clergy that totalled 40% of the entire male population distributed among 700 monasteries of immense wealth. As the foremost of these, the Gandantekchenling which still stands in Ulaanbaatar today, a huge Tibetan-style temple was built to house a 20 metre high statue of Megjid Janraysegu, healer of the blind, in the hope that the Bogd — who had lost his sight through syphilis — would be miraculously cured. It wasn't until disease and alcoholism brought about his death in May 1924 that leftist elements within the new Party were able to begin moving closer to Soviet policy: a first step on this road being to remove any possibility of a ninth incarnation taking up office.

Official histories of the period suggest that this was accomplished with minimal opposition — the selection process, always accompanied by much manoeuvring among factions within the clergy, was referred to at the Fifth Party Congress in 1926: 'As to the inviting of a Ninth Khutagt, it is suspended, as there is no guidance on this matter in the sacred legends, in consequence of which a detailed examination of this question at the highest levels of the Buddhist hierarchy is necessary.'

Since this would involve the higher lamas in long and treacherous journeys to Lhasa, through territories controlled by war-lords and bandits, the problem was evidently to be resolved through procrastination and obstruction.

It now seems increasingly clear however that the Party also employed less roundabout methods of settling the matter. Early in 1925 lamas had identified a possible candidate as the son of a female 'shaman' whose birth, on a river bank in the northern Selenge province, was said to have been accompanied by mysterious omens and voices. The rapidly spreading news of this child who uttered amazing prophecies of a glorious future for Buddhist Mongolia caused the Central Committee to post proclamations in the capital attempting to quell the rumours. But the potential threat posed by a widely lauded Ninth Javtsandamba Khutagt of Mongolian nationality was too great to combat through propaganda alone, and corres-

pondence in government archives now made available indicates that the issue caused considerable concern even to the new Premier of the Peoples Republic, Tserendorj. The shaman Tsendjav, the boy's father Tudev and the rest of his family were relocated at a village on the slopes of the Bogd Uul mountain just south of the capital where — separated from the home province where they had most influence — they could more easily be kept under surveillance.

Meanwhile two delegations left for Lhasa — one of high lamas seeking to inform the Dalai Lama of their selection of the new candidate, and a second led by Central Committee member Gombo-Ichin and the partisan Amgalan, the product of the Fifth Party Congress declaration in 1926.

In its early years several leaders of the Peoples Republic looked favourably on religion and there was talk of a new reformed 'Pure Buddhism' compatible with Marxist ideology. But this 'Renewal' movement was thoroughly expunged, at the Seventh Party Congress in 1928 when facilitated by the death of the relatively moderate Tserendorj, there was a purge of 'Rightists' at the instigation of Comintern representatives. Men labelled as such were either executed or sent to labour camps — and when Gombo-Ichin returned from Lhasa he too was arrested on the charge of trying to identify the Ninth Bogd when he met the Dalai Lama. It was during this swerve to the left that Tsendjav's son was gaoled and the rest of his family probably liquidated.

Held in the same prison as the boy was one of Mongolia's 13 lesser Khutagts from the nearby Manjshir monastery on the southern side of the Bogd Uul. As head of a strictly orthodox centre of the Yellow Faith the Manjshir Khutagt was particularly anxious to remove the Communists and, in 1923, his involvement in a conspiracy of 18 high lamas who sought intervention by the Japanese had been exposed and he had received a ten year gaol sentence — later reduced on the understanding that, should there be further cause for his arrest, he would be executed. When the time came for his release however, the Manjshir Khutagt selflessly offered to forsake his liberty so that the Ninth Bogd could be given his freedom and dispatched to Tibet. Whether the Party's security forces accepted this proposal is unclear; but present inhabitants of Selenge province, the boy's birthplace, maintain that the child did arrive in Lhasa, while the Manjshir Khutagt — who was indeed later rearrested — was executed during the wholesale purges of the 1930s.

Following the rebellion of western provinces in 1931, the remorseless persecution of the Church began in earnest under Premier Choybalsan. Stalin asked the Mongolian leader: 'Why is your government not killing or imprisoning the monks? They are impediments on the road to socialism' and sent his NKVD 'advisers' to assist.

Perhaps one of the least known and documented tragedies of the 20th century resulted. Within ten years at least 75,000 lamas — approximately one tenth of the whole population — had been executed. After the destruction more than 2,600 religious buildings of all sizes had been reduced to only four temples left standing in the entire country, and gone were

virtually all the nation's priceless artistic treasures and books.

Mongolian historians today, while condemning Choybalsan for '... taking state power into his own hands,' describe the massacres as '....deeds of Mongol brawn and Russian brain'. His rise to dictatorship, marked by a violence and treachery which parallels that of Stalin, was characteristic of the times — a eulogy to the Soviet leader in 1941 illustrating the kind of self-abasement the Mongol people were required to support: 'Thanks to Stalin's concern, in the country where the Living Buddha was worshipped there appeared the industrial combinat; into an uncultured land there appeared the light of culture...'

Yet despite the State's merciless suppression there is evidence that the population widely retained its beliefs and, staunch supporter of communist internationalism though he was, Choybalsan was himself the product of a lamasery school and seems to have been as susceptible to the mystical draw of Lamaism as the broad masses.

In 1990 a leading Mongolian journalist, Dojoodorj, produced a television documentary which purports to identify a lesser Khutagt, living in the capital today, who survived Choybalsan's security apparatus in the 1940s. Discovered as a boy in the north-eastern Hentiy province after his gift of clairvoyance was recognised by local lamas, large numbers of people from surrounding provinces gathered regardless of the inherent dangers. When the Ministry of Internal Affairs heard that some of his prophecies included Japanese rule of Mongolia and the end of the Soviet Union they arrested the boy and his parents and brought them to Ulaanbaatar. Here, while the parents were shot in 1947, the boy was held secretly at the residence of Choybalsan who, it is reported, often consulted the prisoner about a variety of subjects.

According to the journalist, instead of ordering a further routine execution, Choybalsan then instructed a minor ministry official to adopt the child, giving him the new name of Chimeddorj — the State police having ensured that the truth about his past would remain secret by giving him a brain-damaging injection. Dojoodorj came across him in 1989, working as a humble mechanic in Ulaanbaatar, after his workmates had reported his strange ability to foretell illness and death. The journalist also arranged for his return to Hentiy where a family recognised a child lost 45 years before.

Dubious though much of this story seems it was accepted by many Mongols, particularly after it was partially corroborated by an old man who openly admitted on television his responsibility for the deaths of Chimeddorj's parents. It certainly typifies the kind of detail emerging about the country's traumatic past and indicates an extraordinarily undiminished faith in the powers of Khutagts.

Decades after the Party had supposedly rid Mongolia of the scourge of religious belief and planted it firmly on 'the path of building communism... bypassing capitalism' the official press found it necessary to critically report in 1972 that 'misguided believers drawn in large numbers' were attending prayer-meetings and fortune-telling at the home of an

ex-lama in the capital, while 'certain deceitful people' still claimed to be religious incarnations.

In his authorised biography the Dalai Lama remarks on '... the tremendous depth of Buddhist feeling' he encountered during visits to Ulaanbaatar in 1979 and 1982, when even some senior members of the Communist Party hierarchy secretly came to ask for his blessing. But complaints by the Security Minister during the early 80s of widespread visits to 'sacred' rocks to leave offerings of money, vodka and tea, and the prevalence of 'physicians', 'wizards' and 'bone-setters' highlight how covert religious activity continued to meet with official disapproval.

While it is true to say that some worship was permitted at the single functioning monastery in Ulaanbaatar throughout the years of Soviet-style socialism, it was always under close supervision. The 100 or so lamas were retained only as a controlled instrument of foreign policy; a measure of the head lama's real vocation being that, since Moscow and Beijing then maintained friendly relations, he thoroughly condemned the Tibetan uprising of 1959 in the strongest possible terms.

Paradoxically it was during this rebellion in Tibet, so deplored by the Ulaanbaatar lamas, that the Dalai Lama escaped to India accompanied by the man who is reputed to be the Ninth Javtsandamba Khutagt of Mongolia.

Now living in the exiled Tibetan community as a layman, since he is not yet an old man it seems impossible that this could be the son of the shaman Tsendjav. A stronger possibility is that this particular individual's claim to office is the result of attempts by Imperial Japan, during the 1930s, to encourage 'Pan-Mongolism' by supporting the selection of a Ninth Bogd in Inner Mongolia — a delegation of high lamas under Japanese escort having visited Lhasa in 1939 and obtained the Dalai Lama's approval.

As far as the laity of Mongolia are concerned however, the Ninth Bogd's origins are probably of less importance than the fact that he exists — at their Congress of spring last year the new Buddhist Believers' Union decided to invite the Ninth Javtsandamba Khutagt residing in India to Ulaanbaatar during 1991. Relaxation of the Soviet grip on power a few years ago allowed the authorities to permit a renaissance of both Lamaist culture and nationalist sentiments, and today there are more than 100 monasteries nationwide where over 1,000 lamas — often in temporary 'ger' temples while restoration work is under way — once again intone the scriptures amidst flickering yak butter candles and smouldering incense.

But despite the new climate of religious freedom a further visit by the Dalai Lama planned for July 1991 was reluctantly postponed — with the country currently facing serious economic crisis the government could not afford to offend China and thus jeopardise prospects of a foreign-trade route via the port of Tianjin. Another consideration was the impossibility, while extensive food rationing is necessary, of feeding the tens of thousands of people who would have descended on Ulaanbaatar from the countryside.

To date Mongolia has yet to witness the arrival of a Ninth Bogd — since

his coming would seem to be linked with the movements of the Dalai Lama who has now been invited to hold the 'Kalachakra' teachings of Tibetan Buddhism at a more expedient time during the next year.

Should this take place and the Javtsandamba Khutagt return, Mongols would surely be seeing the rebirth of a national identity stifled for generations. It is unlikely that the palace of the Bogd Khaan could ever again be the seat of power for a 'Greater Mongolia'; but the expected return of a long absent figurehead — following developments such as the reinstatement of Genghiz Khaan as a national hero, the discovery of his tomb on Mongolian soil and new independence movements in Tuva, Buryatia and Inner Mongolia — suggests the beginning of a new era of cultural self-determination for all the Mongol peoples of Central Asia.

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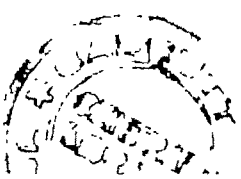
The December number of *Contemporary Review* includes: *South Asia Takes a Big Step Towards Disarmament* by Thomas Land and *The War Poets of 1639: Carew, Suckling and Lovelace* by Donald Bruce.



THE END OF NATION STATES?

by Nigel M. Healey

GENERAL elections are invariably won and lost on the basis of a political party's perceived ability to manage the economy. Governments that suffer runaway inflation and unemployment face a rough ride at the hustings; opposition parties woo voters with promises of faster growth and jobs for all. But how much power do the politicians really have to shape Britain's economic destiny? As the global economy becomes increasingly integrated, the decisions that determine British levels of employment and output — indeed, its very economic structure — are being taken in the boardrooms of 'stateless' corporations, rather than in the committee rooms of the Palace of Westminster.

The growth of 'transnational corporations' (TNCs) — that is, companies which produce in two or more countries — has been one of the most striking phenomena of the post-war era. In Britain, 316 of the top 1,000 companies are now foreign-owned, while most of the major British-owned companies have overseas subsidiaries. Together, foreign- and domestically-owned TNCs in Britain account for 45% of manufacturing employment and 30% of gross domestic product. One-third of all British exports are now 'intra-firm' transactions, as domestic subsidiaries send intermediate and final products to overseas subsidiaries of the same parent company.

The growing importance of TNCs raises important economic questions. Why do companies choose to establish overseas production facilities rather than supplying their overseas markets with exports from their home country? Just how significant is the role of TNCs in the British economy and how is this role changing over time? And, most importantly of all, what are the implications of TNCs' activities for the British economy? For example, how does outward investment by British TNCs, on the one hand, and inward investment by foreign TNCs, affect the structure of industry and employment in Britain? This article addresses these and related issues.

Why do companies become TNCs?

There is a large number of competing theories purporting to explain the growth of TNCs but, in the final analysis, they all boil down to the same conclusion: companies set up production facilities in different countries because it increases their profitability in the long run. There are several reasons why this might be the case. Historically, many companies established subsidiaries overseas in order to secure their supplies of some key input into the productive process. For example, a tea company might buy a tea plantation in India, so that it could be certain of guaranteed supplies to its factories at home. A tyre company might acquire a rubber plantation in SE Asia for the same purpose.

Cross-border vertical integration inspired by such considerations might be upwards, as well as downwards. A manufacturing company might set up its own distribution network overseas in order to increase its control

over the marketing of its products. In the past, Japanese car and motorcycle makers established wholly-owned distribution companies in Europe and the United States, so that they could direct aggressive — and initially loss-making — marketing drives from their home base.

Alternatively, rather than branching out overseas in order to secure control over an activity that would normally be performed by a foreign partner (e.g. a foreign supplier of raw materials or a foreign importer buying products for distribution), companies may transfer parts of their home operations to foreign subsidiaries in order to exploit national differences in factor costs. For example, many US computer companies (e.g. ITT, Hewlett-Packard, Digital) have assembly plants in Mexico and SE Asia, where basic 'screwdriver' operations are carried out by local labour earning a fraction of the wages demanded by American workers.

To the extent that different stages in the productive process have differing requirements in terms of the factor inputs needed, it may be more cost-effective for a company to spread its production across different countries, rather than trying to complete the entire operation on home territory. The globalisation of production in this fashion is a relatively recent phenomenon and has been stimulated by the advent of 'enabling technologies' which reduce the costs of organising and co-ordinating spatial division of labour — for example, cheap air travel, computers and better communications systems (e.g. telephones, modems, fax, etc.). In the future it is likely to become the dominant motive driving the growth of TNCs.

It is important to recognise that differences in factor costs between countries do not stem from different natural endowments and stages of economic development alone. Government policy may play an influential role. To take an example, imagine a two-stage process in which parts for a television set are produced by machine and then assembled by hand. Stage one is capital-intensive and demands a small, but highly-skilled labour force. Stage two is labour-intensive, requiring a ready supply of hard-working, unskilled labour. All other things equal, it might be expected that the firm would locate stage one in a developed country — where capital is easily available and labour expensive, but well-educated — and stage two in a developing country — where labour is cheap and plentiful.

Now suppose that developing countries are keen to industrialise and offer generous government subsidies to foreign TNCs investing in capital-intensive projects. And suppose further that developed countries are concerned about levels of domestic unemployment and grant companies large subsidies for each worker employed, while at the same time using the tax system to penalise capital investment in an attempt to encourage firms to substitute labour for capital. Under such circumstances, government intervention may so distort relative prices that the rational TNC would locate the capital-intensive process in the developing country and the labour-intensive process in the developed country. In recent years, critics of government policy have claimed that generous 'tax holidays' and other benefits have been used to attract Japanese TNCs to high-unemployment regions of Britain and France, when economic considera-

tions alone would have led the companies to site their new operations in the poorer Mediterranean countries, like Greece or Portugal.

Finally, firms may horizontally integrate across national borders, by setting up entire production facilities overseas. For example, the US car producers, Ford and General Motors (which trades here as 'Vauxhall') have had car plants in Britain for over half a century. Historically, these British subsidiaries have not been feeding parts into some global, vertically-integrated production chain (although this is now beginning to happen), but have been building and selling cars from scratch. Indeed, such was their autonomy that both subsidiaries had their own research and development divisions, designing and developing cars that were markedly different from those being produced by their parent companies in Detroit.

The rationale for cross-border horizontal integration is, as with vertical integration, to reduce costs and boost profits. In some industries, transport costs are high relative to the cost of the product (e.g. processed food and bulky, basic engineering equipment) and it is more cost-effective to build the product as close as possible to its intended market. Import tariffs may also tip the balance in favour of local production (which is exempt from tariffs), rather than supplying the overseas market from the home country. It is this latter factor which has encouraged the Japanese car producers to establish sizeable plants in Britain and the United States.

The importance of TNCs in Britain

TNCs play a central role in the British economy. Virtually all Britain's top companies, with the exception of utility companies like British Telecom, PowerGen and British Gas and domestic retail chains like Tesco, are TNCs. Ranked by sales revenue, Britain's largest company is British Petroleum (BP), which produces, refines and distributes oil products across the world. In second place is ICI, the chemicals, plastics and paints giant, which has a global empire stretching from America's midwest to SE Asia. In all, eleven of the top twenty companies in Britain's 'Business 1000' are TNCs. This list includes both British-owned companies like BP and ICI, as well as foreign-owned household names like Ford and Shell. Britain is both the 'home' of domestic TNCs and the 'host' to foreign TNCs.

In recent years, British-owned TNCs have been expanding aggressively overseas. In terms of the scale of total overseas investments by domestic TNCs, Britain ranks second in the world after the United States. Paradoxically, despite Britain's increasingly close economic and political ties with other member states of the European Community (EC), the bulk of outward 'foreign direct investment' (FDI) goes to the United States. (N.B. 'FDI' includes investment expenditure on physical plant and equipment for use by overseas subsidiaries, plus the cost of taking over previously independent foreign companies.) Over the 1980s, British TNCs maintained their dominant position as the largest investors in the United States. In 1989, the last year for which detailed figures are presently available, six of the top ten largest foreign TNCs investing in the United States were either wholly, or part, British-owned. As a host country, Britain is the second most important destination for FDI by foreign TNCs.

Just as British TNCs dominate FDI in the United States, so US TNCs account for the lion's share of FDI in Britain. In 1989, the last year for which figures are available, Ford ranked number one, investing a total of £2.5bn over the year as a whole. This included £100m for the development of a new range of Escort cars, £120m for a new engine programme and £220m for the new Fiesta line at Dagenham plus £1.6bn to buy its way into the luxury car market with its well-publicised acquisition of Jaguar. However, led by Nissan, Japanese TNCs are increasing their stake in the British economy rapidly. In the last five years, 120 major Japanese companies have set up in Britain. Over 30% of all Japanese FDI in the EC to date has been in Britain and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) estimates that, by 2010, subsidiaries of Japanese TNCs could produce 20% of Britain's industrial output. Nevertheless, at present US TNCs still continue to dominate the picture.

With such a large presence, it is not surprising to find that foreign TNCs control a significant proportion of British manufacturing capacity. As a share of total output, foreign-owned subsidiaries account for 40% of all motor vehicles produced (e.g. Ford, Vauxhall, Nissan), 35% of chemicals (e.g. BASF, Hoechst, Bayer), 35% of office machinery (e.g. Canon), 25% of rubber production (e.g. Goodyear, Michelin) and between 10-20% of the output of the mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, publishing, food, drink and tobacco sectors. Overall, foreign TNCs currently account for over 20% of manufacturing output and the proportion is expected to double to 40% by the late 1990s, largely due to the accelerating build-up by the Japanese.

The implications of TNCs for the British economy

Britain is unusually exposed to the influence of TNCs. As noted above, Britain is the second most important home country of TNCs after the United States, with the majority of its top companies operating overseas subsidiaries. And at the same time, Britain is the second most important host country for foreign TNCs after the United States, with over 20% of manufacturing output controlled by foreign companies. Moreover, these rankings are absolute, rather than relative. Britain's direct investments overseas are only 40% of those of US TNCs, but after allowing for differences in the sizes of the two economies, the ratio of British overseas investments to gross domestic product is twice that of the United States. Similarly, the ratio of foreign TNCs' investments in Britain to gross domestic product is five times higher than that of the United States.

What are the implications for the British economy of such openness to TNCs? Advocates of TNCs argue that the economy benefits from their activities, with outward and inward FDI accelerating industrial restructuring and ensuring the most efficient allocation of resources. On the other hand, critics argue that outward FDI by British-owned TNCs robs the economy of sorely-needed investment and jobs, while the influx of foreign TNCs undermines the nation's economic sovereignty.

In essence, the logic of the case in favour of TNCs is an extension of the neo-classical argument for free trade. If companies are able to shift

capital around the world to wherever it earns the highest rate of return then, runs the argument, global economic welfare will be increased. The British owners of TNCs investing abroad will earn higher profits than they would have done had their capital remained in Britain; and workers employed by foreign TNCs in Britain will be more productive than they would otherwise have been, so that they will earn higher wages. (Empirical evidence suggests that employees of foreign TNCs in Britain are 30% more productive and earn 20% more than their counterparts in comparable domestic firms.)

Moreover, to the extent that capital can flow easily into or out of the economy, the existence of TNCs may make the economy more responsive to changing market demands. British TNCs in declining sectors (e.g. textiles) can maintain their sales and international competitiveness by seeking new markets and cheaper sources of labour overseas. Foreign TNCs attracted into expanding sectors (e.g. consumer electronic goods) can provide the capital and know-how necessary to increase the rate of expansion of domestic productive capacity, so boosting growth industries.

Supporters of TNCs also argue that foreign subsidiaries bring with them new technologies and management techniques which may beneficially diffuse to the rest of the economy. For example, Nissan UK has followed the usual Japanese practice of cultivating close links with its suppliers, encouraging them to observe tough, new quality control standards. As a result, the quality of the inputs to the British car industry as a whole has improved. Similarly, Japanese companies have refused to recognise more than one union within their plants, offering domestic companies a new, alternative model for industrial relations.

Critics reject the notion that the activities of powerful, self-serving TNCs benefit the British economy. With regard to outward FDI by British TNCs, they claim that the diversion of investment abroad costs jobs in Britain. In recent years, annual outward FDI has been equivalent to 20-25% of total domestic investment, implying that, had the capital remained at home, domestic investment could have been 25% higher, so increasing output and employment. However, such crude calculations are misleading. A significant proportion of outward FDI is actually financed out of the retained earnings of overseas subsidiaries, rather than raised on British capital markets. Outward FDI also tends to increase British exports of capital goods, as the overseas subsidiary often uses the same domestic suppliers for investment goods as its parent company. And, to the extent that the outward FDI strengthens the market position of the parent company, its domestic investment in subsequent years may be higher, rather than lower, than might otherwise have been the case.

Inward investment by foreign TNCs raises different, but no less important, concerns. As noted above, government intervention can significantly distort the relative price signals being sent to TNCs. In recent years, for example, large Japanese companies worried by the EC's '1992' programme to 'complete the internal market' have sought to establish European subsidiaries before the walls of a possible 'Fortress Europe'

are fully built. Cut-throat competition by national and regional governments to attract Japanese TNCs to depressed parts of northern Europe has granted the newcomers tax advantages that give them an unfair competitive edge over domestic rivals. As a result, the incoming TNCs not only escape paying their share of taxes, but they may drive local rivals out of business, offsetting the expected employment gains.

Such fears are, in fact, a special case of the more general 'Trojan horse' argument against TNCs. Since British subsidiaries of foreign TNCs are offshoots of their powerful parent companies at home, the argument goes, they enjoy a range of advantages over smaller domestic firms — for example, access to cheaper capital, cheaper raw materials, better management, etc. Because markets are finite in size, then, as foreign TNCs build up production in Britain, so domestic companies must inevitably be squeezed out. To the extent that more efficient firms would be driving out less efficient, it is not immediately clear why this should damage Britain's economic interests. But if the foreign TNCs import a high proportion of their capital and intermediate goods from suppliers in their home, rather than their host, country, then the collapse of domestic rivals will lead to further job losses and have a negative impact on the balance of payments.

Conclusions

TNCs play a more influential role in the British economy than in any other major, developed country in the world. Most of the household-name companies in Britain — BP, ICI, Ford, Kellogg, Heinz, Cadbury — are transnational enterprises. In the past, companies became transnational to secure resources and markets or to overcome the transport costs associated with exporting. Increasingly, TNCs are becoming genuinely global, performing different stages of an integrated productive process in different countries to exploit natural and government-induced differences in factor costs. There is a fierce debate about the benefits and costs of TNC activity for individual economies like Britain. What is clear, however, is that the growth of TNCs will continue into the next century.

Indeed, it is already becoming increasingly meaningless to think of companies as 'British' or 'foreign'. Is Ford, an 'American' company which designs and builds cars in Britain, 'foreign'? Is Attock Oil, a 'British' oil exploration and production company which operates only in North America and SE Asia, 'British'? As companies become increasingly global in nature, the convention of labelling a company's nationality by reference to the nationality of its controlling shareholders will become redundant. Imagine the Ford Motor Company of the 21st Century, owned by Japanese shareholders, run by an American chief executive, producing components across the EC and assembling them in Turkey for sale in Russia. In what sense is such a TNC 'American', 'Japanese' or even 'European'? The TNC of the future is likely to be genuinely 'stateless'. Already the trend towards statelessness is well underway and the implications of this phenomenon for the control and management of national economies by governments are liable to be as profound as they are, at present, so little understood.

HONG KONG: PAYING THE PRICE FOR BRITAIN'S MISTAKES

by Paul Mackintosh

HEADS should roll at the Foreign Office. Her Majesty's Government has been bounced into breaking China's well-deserved diplomatic quarantine in their haste to secure Beijing's approval for Hong Kong's new airport. Days after hailing freedom's triumph in Russia, John Major was obliged to sit down with the architects of the Tiananmen Square massacre, thanks to botched diplomacy which forced Britain to play its last card. Our relations with a major power are being determined by what should have been a competently managed sideshow; errors in a small compass are having repercussions far outside.

The Foreign and Colonial/Commonwealth Office bears much of the blame for this sorry state of affairs. Its mandarins (sic) have presided over a policy whose calamitous consequences are hidden only by distance; they have handled critical negotiations on the future of the colony with craven ineptitude. Their record on this issue has been described by Ian Scott, a political scientist at the University of Hong Kong, as 'a continuing sequence of blunder, followed by bluster, followed by grovelling' demonstrating 'once again, how bankrupt British foreign policy is on China'. Such mismanagement deserves the rankest scorn.

Heads, of course, will not roll; for it is politicians, not civil servants, who carry the can when major issues of policy go awry. The real culprits will probably escape with a knighthood. In the normal course of events this is the proper apportionment of blame, for in a democracy civil servants are but the limbs for a political will exercised by elected representatives of the *polis*. However, Hong Kong has been preserved in artificial abnormality: it neither enjoys nor will enjoy full democratic government. Civil servants are its government. Its 5.7 million citizens are, in the old sense, *subjects*: their political rights are highly circumscribed; they are ruled, not represented. Yet in the first-ever elections to Hong Kong's Legislative Council on 15 September, pro-democracy candidates won 16 out of the 18 directly elected seats. The Governor, Sir David Wilson, chose to ignore this result and included only one pro-democracy activist in the other 42 appointments to the Council that are his prerogative — electing to appease China.

Great Britain has denied the people of Hong Kong their democratic rights against the time when they will once again fall under the sway of their erstwhile Motherland. The British administration's claim to speak for Hong Kong is thus fatally flawed; and its dealings with Peking severely compromised. This summary and erroneous policy has left Britain with scant legitimacy in the crucial bargaining now at hand.

Bad enough to have given any hostages to fortune in this manner. Worse when those hostages are some of the most industrious, urbane and

well-informed citizens to be found anywhere. The lucky residents of Hong Kong enjoy the best life expectancy in the world, outdoing even the Japanese. The economic vitality of this *de facto* city-state is a lesson and a reproach to that larger island nation which, in sublime indifference to irony, *rules* it. Hong Kong is the world's sixteenth most productive state; it exports more than India, a country with one hundred times its population. Average wages are second only to Japan in the Asian sphere. The colony spends about a fifth of its official budget on education; the largest tranche of any in its public spending round. The general level of education is exemplary, and familiarity with the modern economic culture of computers and telecommunications, once again, shames Britain.

The Hong Kong Chinese have plugged into the sources of contemporary economic power, while the English seem content to keep pulling the cast-iron levers of yesteryear. They have created a gem of miniaturized modernity. And it is these people whom we are about to hand over, bound and helpless, to the men of Tiananmen.

One could argue that the Hong Kong Chinese should have agitated earlier and louder for democracy; that they deserve their fate. Similar arguments advanced on the first day of the abortive putsch in Russia declared that the Russian people were apathetic and predisposed to serfdom: then those same people disproved such nonsense on the streets. In Hong Kong there is the election result, and one tenth of the entire population turned out to demonstrate after Tiananmen. Furthermore, this argument simply diverts attention from the guilt of the Mother of Parliaments. During the retreat from Empire the British sought to leave democratic institutions behind in all former colonies, many of which were far less sophisticated than Hong Kong. Low cynicism has been at work here, the kind of cynicism that sells its birthright.

It would be sad to think that Whitehall mandarins had been foolish enough to barter away the liberty of Hong Kong against the vague hope of some eventual access to Chinese markets — as though Britain's moribund industries would snatch the prize from countries like Korea, Taiwan and Japan with booming, adventurous economies and strong historical and cultural ties to China. Yet if the British seriously wanted admission to China's markets after 1997, what better staging-post for them than a prosperous and stable Hong Kong? The colony's populace have registered their own opinion in concrete terms: only some 65,000 of them applied for the 250,000-plus British passports available under the much-bruited Governor's Recommendation Scheme. Yet 95% of a poll taken in 1982 wanted the present government to stay on. Goodwill has been recklessly squandered.

Whitehall and Westminster know that few votes will be lost over Hong Kong, just as few votes are allowed there. Sir David Wilson may have to step down — Mr. Major was not pleased to be tarred with the brush of appeasement — but there is no danger of any British politician being voted out of office over this issue. The government has visibly washed its hands: to general indifference. The scandal remains a scandal of the elite:

fought on principle or prejudice within a politically aware and active minority. Those on the ground who will really suffer from its resolution are just too far away to be visible to any but the far-sighted.

It is a moot point as to whether or not the officers of the British Crown have acted well by their own lights in Hong Kong. Perhaps their principal fault is that they have shown themselves too much themselves in their dealings there. Cavalier disregard for the rights of the governed is old hat in Britain; decision-making in secret by cabals also; likewise the confinement of political culture to the elite. Yet how sordid these standards appear once exposed in a modern international context! The behaviour of the Foreign Office over Hong Kong exemplifies the disastrous incapability that Britain's bureaucracy exhibits when asked to actually come to grips with the realities of a modern state. Since 1945 the civil service has failed to enable British business, properly educate the populace, or upgrade the national infrastructure. The Foreign Office betrays its heritage in its too-little too-late approach to Hong Kong, in the very existence of a Governor for this advanced community. Such paternalist attitudes were perhaps appropriate a century ago; they are pathetically inadequate to the issues which they are now called on to address.

Constitutionally, Britons are also still subjects of the Crown, enjoying their freedoms as privileges; not citizens with inalienable rights. No republican culture of liberty and public duty is in place in Britain to ensure the proper education and motivation of the people for individual and public good. Modern capitalism has succeeded best when practised by a free, active and motivated populace — as in the United States, Japan or Germany. Instead, in England it receives lukewarm support from a philistine bourgeoisie and an ill-educated mass: and the culture in which they are deficient is precisely the culture which forestalls anarchy — the basic political and economic culture which is the modern health of nations. The condition of Russia and its former satellites shows how democracy facilitates a sound economy. Liberty and prosperity have proven to be indivisible: in Britain we enjoy neither. Low expectations breed low standards.

The Hong Kong Chinese have had the good fortune to be ruled by us instead of Beijing for many years; now they have the misfortune of being ruled by us when we should long ago have let them rule themselves. Totalitarianism has been erased from Europe; now Britain is handing it one last victory. And why appease? Boris Yeltsin said and proved that 'you can make a throne of bayonets, but you cannot sit on it for long'. Communism is doomed in China likewise; British policy should reflect this certainty. History never forgives incompetence; nor will it tolerate inanition. Abroad, as at home, Britain continues to be compromised by the backward, senseless or simply absent norms of its national institutional culture. But this time, and in the eyes of the world, someone other than the British is paying the price.

Compare Britain and Hong Kong: a state of sixty million; a city-state of nigh on six million. To which would a developing nation (say, Thailand,

or Malaysia) look for a model example of a modern society: the sixty, or the six? Which people have shown themselves better able to survive and thrive in the 1990s; the sixty, or the six? And now the sixty will present the six to the world's largest, most unregenerate totalitarian state, having neatly trussed them beforehand.

For the people of Hong Kong there may still be some hope. Their best hope is that the Communist gerontocracy in Beijing may die off soon and its illegitimate tyranny collapse without too much bloodshed. Or perhaps the British, in a last flurry of conscience, will leave their colony with a full democratic government which China would be loath to crush. If either event seems unlikely, the citizens of Hong Kong should jump ship now. But at least they can hope that they are steering towards a better tomorrow. No such hope for Britain. In their retirement, trimming the wisteria, may the responsible parties reflect, and shudder.

CHALLENGING RACISM WITH THE SCOTTISH POLICE

by Emil Rado

I had been running Adult Education classes at Glasgow University with my colleague Mono Chakrabarti on *Challenging Racism in Scotland* for several years when, in 1986, we decided to grasp the nettle and put a proposal to the Chief Constable of Strathclyde Police. Each year up to a third of our class consisted of police officers: certainly not what our stereotypes of 'the polis' would have led us to expect. They ranged from Constable to Assistant Chief Constable, paid their own fees, and came in their own time, sometimes still in uniform, straight off the beat.

Our letter to the Chief Constable suggested that if courses of this type were so well patronised by members of his Force, perhaps there was a contribution we could make to his staff development programme. We half expected a polite response to the effect that Mr. Sloan (as he then was) was not telling us how to run *our* departments, and likewise would we kindly refrain from telling him how to run his. Fortunately, our expectations were quite wrong. A few days later we were invited to put forward formal proposals and a draft course-outline, and come to discuss them at a working lunch the following week.

Along with our draft syllabus for a two-day course, we suggested that they should be residential and asked to run them with two senior police colleagues of Chief Superintendent rank. For these courses to have external credibility with the black communities of Scotland, the police needed our independent perspective, and to be seen to be giving us a free hand to shape the agenda. Equally, for us to have credibility with police audiences of any rank, we needed the participation of our senior police colleagues. Both these suggestions and our course outline were accepted; Ayr Police Station was chosen as the venue for the courses. To underline the importance he attached to such training, Mr. Sloan undertook to travel to Ayr to open them whenever he could.

Since then we have run 25 courses, for police officers of all grades, from Constables to Superintendents, and from Argyll to Ayrshire. The contents and the invited additional speakers vary from course to course, depending on the rank of the participants. But the overall objectives remain unchanged. We focus on racial prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination, as forms of group and individual behaviour that are unacceptable in a civilised society. We try to throw light on why and how they occur in Britain and elsewhere: whose interest they serve. We present evidence on the substantial extent of racial discrimination that still exists in Britain. Much of it is intentional: employers or landlords telling a black applicant that a job has been taken, a flat has been let — then offering it to a white person. But indirect discrimination that favours some groups at the expense of others, whether intentionally or not, is even more powerful: e.g. recruiting by word of mouth.

We suggest that British immigration and nationality legislation since 1962, by being explicitly aimed at 'new Commonwealth' (i.e. black) people, may have legitimised and reinforced existing prejudicial attitudes and procedures. We review the strengths and weaknesses of the 1976 Race Relations Act, and stress the obligation it places on local authorities to eradicate direct and indirect discrimination and enhance access to public services.

To have grown up in Britain as a white person without acquiring attitudes of racial superiority is a rare accomplishment: most of us have prejudices. On our courses we neither accuse people of being prejudiced, nor do we explicitly try to tackle their individual prejudices. We try to support them as they become aware that they may be prejudiced or that the institutions they work for may be discriminatory. We may not be wholly responsible for our attitudes: we are for our behaviour. Police officers, we point out, bear special responsibility for their behaviour: because of their powers as enforcers of the law, their prejudices are potentially more dangerous than those of others. For this reason, about a third of each course is devoted to outlining Strathclyde Police's race relations policy, its application to particular situations, and ways of developing 'good practice' at the grassroots level.

I shall resist the temptation to discuss why institutions of higher education should be involved in such courses. Having been personally affected by racial discrimination both on the receiving and on the giving end (as a Jewish child in wartime Hungary and as a white person working in colonial Africa), I could not but welcome the chance to use my knowledge and understanding to help those who wanted to combat it.

What have our courses achieved? We have learned that, as regards racial prejudice, Strathclyde police officers are not significantly different from other groups we work with: teachers, social workers, housing officials. We have raised the issues that affect relations between the police and Scotland's black communities with a substantial fraction of Britain's second largest police force, finding our audiences ready to listen and secure enough to be self-critical. We feel we are getting across the point that good intentions are not enough: results matter even more. During the last four years there have been a number of welcome developments in Strathclyde Police's policies and practices on race relations. Without presuming to claim credit for these, we like to think that our work with senior policy makers may have helped to clarify issues and raise priorities. From our course members we have learnt an enormous amount; among our senior police colleagues we have found not just an intellectual but also an emotional support and commitment that has grown with the years, and is clearly percolating down among the ranks.

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THE GHOSTS OF VERSAILLES AND OXFORD

by James Munson

THE most famous as well as the most argued about ghost story in modern English history occurred ninety years ago in a French garden. On an overcast August day in 1901, two prim ladies emerged from the vast palace of Versailles into the carefully manicured grounds. Charlotte Moberly and Eleanor Jourdain were both deeply involved in the cause of higher education for women. Charlotte Moberly was Principal of St. Hugh's College, Oxford. Eleanor Jourdain, a considerably younger woman, was Headmistress of a girls' school in Watford and vice-principal elect of St. Hugh's. Both were daughters of Anglican clergymen and both were unmarried.

The two ladies decided they would walk down to the Petit Trianon, a small but exquisite palace in the parks. This had been the favourite retreat of Marie Antoinette in the years before the French Revolution. In its informal 'English Gardens' the Queen could forget suffocating Court formalities. Here she could play at being a milk maid while her friends marvelled at the way the royal farm girl squirted milk into a Sevres pail.

Just over a century after the Queen's execution in 1793, the two Englishwomen set off down the Royal Avenue, passed the fountain of Apollo and took the first turning to the right after the beginning of the Grand Canal. So far there was nothing unusual and they pressed on, their talk of Oxford disturbed only by the crunch of gravel on the paths. Yet they were taking the first steps into an adventure which would last only a few minutes but which would change their lives. It was an adventure which after ninety years is still hotly debated and which some would rather forget.

They strolled past the Grand Trianon built for Louis XV to give private dinner parties for his more intimate friends. They took a path through the woods which seemed deserted. Suddenly Miss Moberly saw a woman shaking a white cloth out of a farmhouse window and was surprised that her companion didn't see her. As they walked on they came across two men, dressed rather oddly in eighteenth century style three-cornered hats. The ladies asked for directions and the men rather sullenly pointed the way to the Petit Trianon. All round them the atmosphere seemed to change. The gentle breezes which had made their walk pleasant stopped and were replaced by an 'extraordinary depression'. A heaviness came over them. They felt like they were walking in their sleep. The woods now looked as if 'worked in tapestry' — 'flat and lifeless', without light, shade or breeze.

Eleanor Jourdain now saw a woman handing a jug to a young girl in the doorway of an old cottage. They, too, wore 'unusual' clothes and seemed frozen, like one of those *tableau vivants* from her Victorian childhood. In spite of the strange atmosphere, the two pressed on until,

ahead of them, sitting in front of a small wooden building, they saw a man in a dark cloak and slouch hat. He turned and stared at them. He had an evil looking, pock-marked face. Fear came over them. Suddenly another man ran up from behind. Miss Moberly remembered he wore buckled shoes. He had a peculiar smile on his face and was shouting frantically, 'Mesdames, mesdames, il ne faut pas passer par là. Par ici — cherchez la maison'. (Ladies, ladies you must not go that way; the other way — go to the house.) Eleanor Jourdain thanked him. Charlotte Moberly remembered that he vanished although the sound of his running could still be heard.

They followed his orders and Eleanor Jourdain kept drawing her skirt close to her as if people were crowding round her — neither could see anyone. As they finally came up to the Petit Trianon, Charlotte Moberly saw a woman in an old fashioned green dress and white hat. She was sketching. The Englishwoman looked quickly at her face: it was beautiful but old. Some indescribable feeling forced her to turn away from the lady in green. Miss Moberly was surprised that her companion said nothing. The reason was simple: Eleanor Jourdain saw no one there.

Once at the Petit Trianon the ladies walked up to the terrace and looked over into the courtyard, the *Cour d'Honneur*. A door flew open and a jaunty young man stepped out. He slammed the door and with a cynical smile told them to go round to the other side if they wanted to get in. They followed his directions and found a merry wedding-party in dresses similar to their own being shown round by a guide. Suddenly their sense of oppression vanished. Both women felt tired and confused. What was in reality only a walk of a few minutes felt like hours and there seemed only one practical thing to do: they got a carriage back to the Hotel des Réservoirs in Versailles and had afternoon tea. Neither spoke about what each had seen — it all seemed so strange.

Afterwards they returned to Eleanor's flat in Paris. Her diary entry for the fateful day has only one word, 'Versailles'. In the following week they still didn't speak about what had happened until Charlotte wrote to a friend in England about her Varsailles visit. Her sense of oppression returned and she asked Eleanor Jourdain, 'Do you think that the Petit Trianon is haunted?' 'Yes,' she said, 'I do.'

Three months later Miss Jourdain wrote to the older lady about 'our Versailles ghost story'. A French friend told her that one day and one night every year the gardens of the Petit Trianon are peopled by the friends and courtiers of Marie Antoinette. There had been frequent reports of the Queen herself being regularly seen sitting outside the Petit Trianon. 'I do wonder,' she wrote, 'if your pretty lady was Marie Antoinette?'

The two women discussed their peculiar visit to Versailles and Miss Moberly, who was not in the habit of being crossed, was amazed that her friend had not seen the lady seated before the Petit Trianon even though she was only a few feet away from her. They agreed they would each write down what they remembered of that strange afternoon. By January Eleanor Jourdain was back in Paris and returned to Versailles. She could

not find the woods where they had walked, the paths they had followed and several of the buildings they had seen. Once again she felt the same oppression and talked to people in eighteenth century dress. This time she heard music in the distance.

These experiences caused her to read about Marie Antoinette. She discovered that on 5 October, 1789, as the mob of fishwives were surging towards Versailles to capture the Royal Family, Marie Antoinette sat in the garden of the Petit Trianon. When a page begged her to escape he reportedly said to her, '...il ne faut pas passer par là; par ici — cherchez la maison.' 'La maison' was the Queen's term for the Petit Trianon and these were the very words the two women remembered hearing 112 years after they were spoken.

Another two years passed before the women returned to Versailles. Now everything seemed different. The grounds where they walked simply were not there and an overgrown rhododendron bush occupied the spot where the 'lady' had sat sketching. They now resolved to get to the bottom of the mystery and spent the next nine years searching for an explanation to what they had experienced.

They eventually put names to faces and concluded that the evil looking man was the Comte de Vaudreuil, whose face was marked by small pox and whose influence over Marie Antoinette was pernicious. The woman sketching was the Queen herself. They were able, at least to their own satisfaction, to identify all the people they had met and even the music Miss Jourdain had heard. But they still needed an explanation for what happened to them.

They decided that the date of the first visit was important: 10 August. It was on this date, in 1792, that Marie Antoinette, along with her husband and two children, sat inside a special *loge* or cell as the National Assembly debated abolishing the monarchy. Outside the mob howled for their blood. The two Englishwomen decided that the miserable Queen soothed herself by letting her mind wander to her favourite spot, the Petit Trianon, and the people who were with her there. The Queen's recollections had been so powerful that they outlived her death on the guillotine and lived on in her gardens. The two unsuspecting English ladies had, as Charlotte Moberly put it, not just seen Marie Antoinette but had 'inadvertently entered within an act of the Queen's memory when alive'.

In 1911 they published their fantastic story, their researches and their even more fantastic explanation in *An Adventure*. The book was published anonymously but everyone in Oxford knew who the authors were. Ridicule was heaped on their heads, particularly by those dons who saw it as a wonderful way to mock the cause of women's education. Some said the women had stumbled across a film crew while others said they had met partygoers at a costume ball. Most said they were just silly females who had imagined it all and who were too stubborn and opinionated to see how ludicrous they were. Despite the criticisms the book has been reprinted many times, has been made into a television play and remains a favourite Oxford story — except at St. Hugh's College. There it can still cause a

shudder in the Senior Common Room.

Without doubt most if not all of the evidence they produced is what a good barrister would call circumstancial. To professional historians their researches are often haphazard and sometimes ludicrous. Being a bishop's daughter and a formidable character who always 'tells the truth' does not mean that what Miss Moberly firmly believed to be the truth *was* the truth.

Likewise, evidence frequently follows experience and adds to it. One hears something but is not sure what was said. One then reads that what could have been said was such-and-such. One decides that *that* is what one heard. Doctors who deal with victims of strokes in the elderly call this 'cueing'. The stroke victim tells you what they think you want to hear: if you ask 'Isn't this a beautiful chair?' they will agree. If you ask the opposite they will also agree because they take their 'cue' from you, like a child. Having 'seen' an evil looking man in a slouch hat and cape the two women were primed to believe that the man just had to be the pock-marked Comte de Vaudreuil. Who could say he wasn't?

Papers at the Bodleian Library in Oxford show that Miss Moberly had a habit of having 'adventures'. In 1909, while visiting Switzerland, Miss Jourdain stayed at the Insel Hotel at St. Gallen. While sitting in the hotel lounge she heard voices and felt movement. A second visit by both ladies produced more experiences and they concluded they had heard a medieval mass. In 1912, she visited Malmaison, the villa of Napoleon and Josephine near Paris. While lying down she 'saw' a battle scene filled with French and English soldiers. The next morning she told her story to her companion who said she had 'seen' the same thing. In 1913, one the eve of Miss Moberly's first visit to Cambridge, she had another experience, a 'vision between waking and sleeping' of a medieval funeral at King's College.

While visiting Rome Charlotte Moberly 'saw' the beheading of St. Paul. While visiting the Louvre Museum in Paris both ladies 'saw' a tall man in a loose toga with a golden circlet on his head. They looked at him and he looked at them. The following year they came across a coin of Constantine and, wrote Miss Moberly, 'I recognised him at once. It was the man I had seen in the Louvre'. Then they discovered that the Roman Emperor had twice marched on a road which lay under the Louvre. There is one final story still current in Oxford. Miss Moberly once described how she had 'seen' a hanging in that most respectable of North Oxford streets, St. Margaret's Road.

If the two Oxford ladies were mistaken in part or sloppy in their research, this still doesn't make their story untrue. An explanation too fantastic to be believed does not mean the experience did not happen. The fact that their accounts do not always agree can point as much to their telling the truth as to their lying. In a law court how often do two witnesses' accounts always agree? If they were lying or deceiving themselves, why did they expose themselves to ridicule by publishing their experiences (even if under false names) and why did Charlotte Moberly leave her papers to the Bodleian Library? The fact that they had several experiences may show they simply had abilities the rest of us lack. To condemn them

out of hand is like the man who is colour-blind dismissing descriptions of colours. What *are* the limits to human experience and perception?

It is very easy to laugh at the two spinsters with their vivid imaginations, their amateur historical research and their ability to stumble across 'facts' to validate their experiences. Yet only two years after her Malmaison vision, real battles were tearing Europe apart. The Swiss hotel where the two ladies 'heard' a medieval mass actually had been a monastery. There are records of a medieval funeral which took place in a church on the site of King's College and which fits Charlotte Moberly's recollections. Finally, Oxford's gallows had existed at Gallows Baulk, Green-ditch. Green-dith later became St. Margaret's Road.

Truth or imagination? Fantastic or believable? Two over-wrought women or two gifted guides to a world most of us cannot see? We shall never be certain what those two Oxford ladies saw at Versailles and even if we did, how could we ever prove it?

During the lifetime of Eleanor Jourdain and Elizabeth Moberly the Society for Psychical Research refused to accept their explanation of what they said had happened. (Tit for tat, neither of the two ladies had much respect for the Society.) After their deaths the controversy rumbles on. In 1957 the writer, Lucille Iremonger, an 'old girl' of St. Hugh's College of which both ladies had been Principal, brought out *The Ghosts of Versailles: Miss Moberly and Miss Jourdain and their Adventure*. She added as a sub-title, 'A Critical Study'. Even if the book is seen as an exercise in debunking—and the criticisms it makes are often very telling—Mrs. Iremonger still had her own doubts. In the penultimate paragraph she asked if a 'human mind can experience happenings outside the narrow groove in which it normally runs . . . whether, in fact, you or I could at any moment step back into the past, or—and this follows—out into the future.' In the final paragraph even she has to admit, 'That question has not yet been answered with a decisive yes or no'.

WORLD THEATRE IN LONDON

by Laurence Green

THE London International Festival of Theatre celebrated its tenth anniversary this year with the appearance of some of the world's leading theatre companies such as the Market Theatre of Johannesburg, the Maly Drama Theatre of Leningrad, Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival and leading Latin American company Rajatabla. Other visitors came from countries as diverse and distant as Poland, Spain, Trinidad and Romania. A true window on the world!

The festival itself was founded in 1981 on a modest budget of £110,000 by Rose de Wend Fenton and Lucy Neal who worked as waitresses to raise money. In subsequent years LIFT, as it is now known, has brought more than 1,500 artists from 31 countries to the capital. The 1991 festival had a budget of £730,000 and a full-time staff of 30, while the events themselves were staged in a dozen locations around the city from cathedrals to kitchens.

'We need the past in order to make sense of the present; otherwise we fall flat and the ghosts that haunt us leave the street and install themselves in our houses and consume us.' So writes Carlos Gimenez, director of Rajatabla, Venezuela's most successful theatre company and one of the best known in Latin America, who brought their compelling production *No-one Writes to the Colonel* to the festival. Adapted from a Gabriel Garcia Marquez short story, it focuses on a retired army officer who, fifteen years after the Revolution in which he served, is still waiting for his pension. His son has been murdered for distributing anti-government literature and he and his asthmatic wife are driven close to starvation as they fight to maintain their dignity and pride, whilst others, more corrupt, thrive. They pin their hopes on their son's fighting-cock who seems sure to win the next fight and earn them a fortune. But the bird has become a symbol of a noble ideal and the colonel will not part with it.

The play begins and ends with a funeral. It is 'the first funeral of someone who has died of natural causes for a long time' — a line which must have had a particularly ironic ring to it for a Venezuelan audience. An angry and moving piece, whose humour undercuts its anguish, it is the story of the common man in Latin America, the bankruptcy of hope and the rape of integrity. Admittedly its impact was diminished somewhat on a non-Spanish speaker like myself, as there was no simultaneous translation, only detailed programme notes. But the forceful, heartfelt performances by this Caracas-based company makes us care about the plight of the characters, while the relentless rain beating down on the rusty, corrugated iron, the recurrent toll of church bells and the slow movement of the silently observant ghosts give the drama a powerful ritualistic flow.

Drama was sadly absent from the Market Theatre Company of Johannesburg's naïvely simplistic fable of regeneration, *Starbrites*, which is a deliberate move away from the overtly political theatre that has emerged

from South Africa in the wake of the release of Nelson Mandela. An uneasy blend of music, unsophisticated humour and puppets, it tells the story of Bongo, the jovial, corpulent leader of the Soweto Starbrites band and his young enthusiastic nephew, Zenzele, who comes to visit his uncle in the city. Expecting to find the glamorous star he remembers from his childhood, Zenzele is confronted with a broken spirit who has lost his woman, his band and his self-respect. Bongo has turned to drink and become a door-to-door salesman of ladies' lingerie. Bearing all the hallmarks of an experimental project, the production is exuberantly performed but is essentially only a minor work from a major company.

I suppose it was inevitable that with the end of tyranny in Romania, the Comedy Theatre of Bucharest should have chosen to emphasise the menacing nature of manipulation, in particular man as marionette in the hands of destiny, in their disappointing production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Set in a circus, with Theseus, Oberon and Quince all played by one ringmaster-like character, the action is played by a company of spirits brought to life by the circus revelry. Magic, though, was the one element that was missing in this heavy-handed and unsubtle production which was performed in Romanian with no English translation, so the humour, poetry and insight of the Shakespearean original was lost here.

Homelessness is not a problem unique to London as the existence of the Los Angeles Poverty Department reminded us. *LAPD Inspects London*, which was performed only a short distance from the Houses of Parliament, was created as the result of workshops between LAPD's ex-homeless (and America's first performance company who have developed work in night shelters, theatres, and in the 'skid row' downtown sections of US cities) and London's present homeless encountered on the streets and at the North London Day Centre. Using true stories, improvisation and character switching, this slice of documentary community theatre helped give an impression of what it is like living on the edge. In a rag-bag of vignettes, we learn of the social problems — worrying parents, girl with 14-month old child returns to her uncaring mother, father who drinks heavily and beats his wife — that have driven these people from their homes and onto the streets. The harsh treatment of patients in mental institutions is also examined. Although ramshackle in construction, it would take a hard heart not to be moved by the sad situation these people find themselves in, a fact reinforced by the thought that after the 'show' they will again be spending the night in the open or in a temporary shelter.

A burst of Caribbean colour and vitality came to the festival in the form of *The Man Who Lit Up the World* from Battimamzel Productions. A celebration of black invention, this is a masquerade play that draws together the strands of black experience over two centuries. Set in a Mas' camp — home base for a variety of disparate characters who combine to create the dancing mobiles, floats and bands for the carnival — the show draws on an array of traditional Carnival Mas' figures. This production, inspired by the works of little-known black inventors, among them Lewis Latimer, who developed the electric lightbulb for Thomas Edison, skilfully

blends drama, dance, design and music to vibrant and spectacular effect.

The resilience of black culture is observed and celebrated with wit and wisdom in the New York Shakespeare Festival Joseph Papp production of *Spunk*. This bold, bluesy musical satire is an adaptation by George C. Wolfe of three tales of legendary 1920s Harlem Renaissance writer and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston. In the first, *Sweat*, Delia is a married woman with only her job as a laundress and her love of God to sustain her in the face of a straying husband and his growing public humiliation and abuse of her. However, when one day he brings home a rattlesnake, the venom turns out to be directed against him. In *Story of Harlem Slang* two snappily dressed, unemployed spivs set their sights on the same young domestic worker on pay day. Their ostensible object is to attract the woman and get a free meal—but what they actually get is their come-uppance! The last—and best—of the playlets, *The Gilded Six Bits*, deals with love betrayed in its account of the young wife of a nightworker who has a passionate fling with the owner of an ice cream parlour. It is only with the birth of a son that this marriage in jeopardy is eventually patched up. A fine ensemble cast, led by the multi-talented Ann Duquesnay, Danitra Vance and Reggie Montgomery, give style and substance to these basically flimsy pieces. Although none of the songs are really memorable, the racy, poetic language ('your heart may be wavy, your head is like gravy') has just the right degree of spunk to leave you wanting more. A truly bracing theatrical brew!

The biggest surprise was the Maly Drama Theatre's newly devised *Gaudeamus*. Superbly performed by the Leningrad based company's younger actors and students, this is a devastatingly funny look at the gruelling lives and political indoctrination of new military recruits in the recently disbanded construction battalion of the Russian army, uncovering with biting irony, the moral decay of Soviet autocracy. The play, devised as a series of nineteen improvisations, charts the challenges facing the young men on entry to the service—from the humiliating initiation scenes, through to the sexual advances of the lieutenant's lusty wife. Visually stunning, the production, bursting with life and vigour, interweaves music, song and dance, pastiche and parody, into an exhilarating whole. There are many innovative touches—a tilted, snow-covered stage, dotted with trapdoors, through which characters appear and disappear, a piano hoisted on stage which provides a springboard for an amorous encounter, and the final transformation of the cast into a raucous jazz band. Using the story as a starting point, Lev Dodin, the company's artistic director, and his group of actors wanted to bring out not only their impressions of Sergei Kaledin's story but also their feelings and thoughts about present day life and the lives of young people in Soviet society. This they have achieved magnificently.

LIFT has indeed been an uplifting experience!

POEM

SIMONE WEIL (1909-1943)

A lesson of her short life
might be this: to spurn
convention; not to seek
refuge in it, as we all do,
sometimes unconsciously;
building lean lives upon it,
calculating each step
of a metrical career.

But to act emphatically
on each new impulse
that might suddenly arise,
even if wildly impractical:
her scheme to air-lift
nurses into the front line;
the strikes she organised
among *the unemployed*.

Living among the poor,
she spurned private means
to identify with them;
deprived of all dignity,
she regained it painfully,
discovering a humanity
stripped of externals;
the barest human worth.

She remained outside
the confessing church,
raising private conscience
above spiritual orthodoxy;
to die unbaptised even
when immersed in Christ,
on the same cross of war
that crucified France.

J. D. Mallinson

[Editor's Note: Simone Weil was a distinguished French philosopher. While working with the French resistance in London, she starved herself to death because of the suffering victims of nazism. Although she came from a prominent Jewish family, she was increasingly drawn towards catholicism although she disliked joining any organized church.]

LLOYD GEORGE AND WINSTON CHURCHILL: CONTRASTS AND SIMILARITIES

by Curtis Arthur Amlund

IT would be an imaginatively rigourous exercise in historical craftsmanship to conceive of and try to describe two more scintillatingly evocative political personalities of this 20th century, or maybe of any recent century, than David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill. Both men by their individual strivings in the differing contexts of the First and Second World Wars personally affected the physical security, hopes and aspirations of two generations of Britons, as well as those peoples living precariously on the European continent and those dwelling anxiously in more distant parts of the globe.

Contrasts

As a beginning, one should mention the more starkly historical divergencies between them that centre on their distinctive backgrounds and traits. Lloyd George was born the outsider from Wales, to whose land he returned when buried there in 1945; Winston Churchill was born the insider, the member of a ducal family, to whose broad acres he also returned when buried near Blenheim Palace twenty years later. Lloyd George's background was interlaced with religious Nonconformity and the vigourous, disciplining experience of being a solicitor; Churchill's was interspersed with Harrow fortified by the equally-disciplining experience of being initiated into the intricate ways of the British army at Sandhurst.

Once this young English officer got to India in the last years of the Victorian age, he proceeded with customary and wide-ranging vigour to read many of the English classics, an exercise in tropical heat that was to provision him with life-long intellectual storages. These mental exercises allowed an older, more travelled and more mature mind, conditioned by politics, rhetoric and officeholding, to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in his seventy-ninth year.

When reading successive materials on the Welshman, one does not readily gain a signal that Lloyd George ever gave himself to the systematic task of becoming acquainted with the classics of the English language. In this sense Churchill was obviously the more literary person.

Apart from written expression, the two men in the pre-radio days differed in their platform rhetoric. Lloyd George seemed visceral in some of his public speech-making, especially during the controversy with the House of Lords over the 1909 budget, when his barbs were hurled almost with abandon at the upper reaches of the Edwardian establishment. Churchill himself joined the fray, but his rhetoric appeared generally more circumspect. Perhaps another way to put it is to suggest that Lloyd George aimed for a political salvo: Churchill had the same kind of target, but he was more restrained in the use of his language, whose darts struck at the periphery of the rhetorical object. Lloyd George exceeded Churchill in gaining an emotional attachment from a crowd in the pre-1914 years.

Churchill, while capable of making an emotional pitch to his audience, was more likely in this period to provide them with a certain tease without entering onto a full-scale attack.

Still another contrast between them: Lloyd George was more persistently, more determinedly identifiable with the left side of the political spectrum; in other words, his ideological compass had a steadier needle to it. Churchill's compass had more sway to it, a condition that in practical terms hardly won him plaudits, particularly in the Conservative party. Then, too, the First War Prime Minister was the more religious person, at least publicly, as he appeared to catch more than his junior colleague the centrality of moral and ethical issues in public life, issues that in his case sprang from his Nonconformist origins.

The earlier Prime Minister was, moreover, not a politician to leave party machinery unused. While he probably did not benefit personally from the sale of honours, he did build up a sizeable fund to be employed for party operations, retaining close supervision over its management after the end of the Great War. Churchill's shifting from one party to another and back again suggests a notable detachment from more strictly party affairs. It may well be that Churchill was simply being Churchill in a literal sense: association with a party, while necessary for electioneering and for officeholding, was not urgently essential to his personal well-being.

The Welshman was more the policy innovator over the long stretch, outlining before and during his Prime Ministership and later in the twenties his own version of British society, a society in which government would assume a major role. The Englishman was more the conservator of things past and present: his response to the 1942 Beveridge Report on the nature of postwar society in Britain was noticeably on the perfervid side. There was an intrinsic reluctance on his part to accept that government's place in society should be central. For him the centralness of life was the individual; for Lloyd George this centralness was the body corporate, in which the individual was to be assisted by the state to realise his potential.

One gains the impression that the politician from Wales was more adept and more adaptive than the Englishman in dealing with people, especially in negotiations affecting labour-management disputes. Churchill, at least in his earlier public career, revealed, consciously or unconsciously, his own aristocratic background and an inclination towards taking a somewhat condescending stance — this was most forcefully exemplified when he became editor of the *British Gazette* during the general strike of 1926.

Finally, it is plausible to argue that Lloyd George was the better administrator: his administrative acumen was founded on an occupation with details; an ability to delegate tasks while simultaneously retaining control over operations; and a capacity to stimulate energy among subordinates. When consideration was being given early in the Second War to appointing him to Government office, the Welshman still displayed an extra-ordinary energy level, at least for a few hours a day.

Churchill as an administrator was more untidy and more the lone

operator who was accustomed to having his way accepted. Probably, the basic difference between them as administrators was that Lloyd George was proficient at dealing with the operational aspects of details, while his junior colleague was more knowing of the nature of details and of their implications for operations.

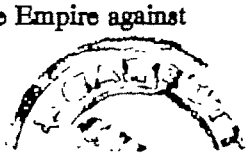
Similarities

Both Prime Ministers, confronted by deteriorating political circumstances, assumed power when the energy levels of the body politic and of officialdom required added impetus. Nineteen-sixteen was not a particularly successful year for British arms, a year in which the battle of the Somme took place, whose effect was to heighten anxiety about ultimate victory for the Anglo-French alliance. Although Churchill obtained the top reins of power at an earlier time in the Second War than did Lloyd George in the First, he, too, found it necessary to expand on British resolve following the campaign of misfortune in Norway. While Lloyd George had a stalemated situation in northern France in 1916, Churchill in 1940 had an equally-perplexing stalemate in the shipping lanes of the world's oceans, where British merchantmen were easy prey to Nazi U-boats.

Both Prime Ministers displayed the kind of energy that impelled their governments to regain a momentum of spirit to bring about eventual victory. While it is true that Churchill took many wartime trips by air, sea and land to distant conferences with the Americans and others, Lloyd George was not exactly inactive in crossing the Channel to parlez with the French and others. Although the First War head of Government did not travel the enormous distances covered by Churchill in the Second War, one has the lasting impression that the former was stronger physically, a heart condition and bouts with influenza and pneumonia having affected Churchill to the point where there was danger to his health in late 1943 in North Africa.

Yet another similarity: both men retained their principal army chiefs to the end of the war. In the instance of Douglas Haig there was a manifest disquietude felt by Lloyd George towards the General for reasons of military strategy. But a close rapport was developed by Haig with King George V, and the implications of this association were not lost on the Prime Minister. In the case of Alan Brooke there was an underlying respect given him by Churchill, who made a conscious effort in the Second War, in contrast to his behaviour during the First, to never depart from the professional advice of military chiefs.

Over the stretch of time from 1916 to 1918 and over the longer span from 1940 to 1945 both Prime Ministers saw military reverses turn into successes when encountering the enemy. While an argument may be that in view of the enormity of the demands for total war against Germany and Japan in the Second War, Churchill was confronted by more insoluble dilemmas in deciding where to direct operations, one may wish to recollect that the not inconsiderable task before Lloyd George in the First War was to harness and mobilise the worldwide resources of the Empire against a common foe.



Both Prime Ministers had an ebullient capacity for rebounding from reverses, however hard the temporary defeats might have been. Although disquieted by successive losses at the Western Front, Lloyd George managed to keep his physical and psychic being in tact. Although disheartened by reversals such as the fall of Tobruk in 1942, when he was visiting President Roosevelt in Washington, Churchill could bounce back from disappointments even when they came with distressing regularity.

Finally, both personalities were genuinely fun to be around, provided of course the visitor was prepared for verbal explosions. To say that neither Lloyd George nor Winston Churchill was dull is an under-statement. Dullness was simply not part of the Welshman's repertoire as a conversationalist, nor was it part of the Englishman's as a monologist.

[Dr. Curtis Amlund is Professor of Political Science at North Dakota State University. He has contributed articles to *The Liverpool Law Review*, *The Cambridge Review* and *Oxford*.]

'NIGHT & DAY': A CONTRIBUTION TO LITERARY HISTORY

by Richard Pennington

FOR many of its 150 years *Punch* has been criticized for being staid, prudish, conventional and the reflection of the ideas of too narrow a social class. But in the 1930s as there was no other humorous publication, one read it, for *Razzle* avoided the accusation of prudery only by falling into the vulgarly obscene. 'What we need is something like the *New Yorker*' was the general opinion; and so in 1937 a small group that included Chatto & Windus, the publishers, decided to produce a British *New Yorker*. Their reader at that time was Oliver Warner with whom I shared an apartment. The preliminary negotiations were conducted very discreetly and we were all bound to secrecy as to the name, suggested by a popular tune then current. 'Everything', I said to Warner, 'depends upon the choice of editor, and the man you should appoint is Cyril Connolly.'

I did not know Connolly personally, but asked him to lunch at my club and there revealed to him as much as I knew of the projected magazine and said that in my opinion he was the right man to be editor. I added that all I could do was to persuade Warner to convince Chatto & Windus. If he were approached officially, I asked, would he accept? He said 'Yes'. He was leaving for Spain, I think to look into the extremely confused state of affairs among the foreign 'sympathisers' of the Government forces and to report to the Foreign Office, and I did not see him again. The next day I had a similar talk with David Low the cartoonist in the hope of enlisting his interest in the new publication; but he did not think his was the kind of humour that would go well with the *New Yorker* style, and he was probably right. I did what I could to persuade Warner to battle for Connolly, and had at least his assurance that he would. And that was all I could do.

It was not long afterwards that Warner came and said he had news for me. They — the promoters of the new magazine — were still short of the minimum amount of capital that would be needed, but that someone had come forward with the offer of the amount — was it £15,000? I have forgotten — but on the condition that he could nominate the editor. I protested that this was dangerous.

'Yes, but we have to have the money.'

'And who is the candidate?'

'Graham Greene.'

I had no right to be angry or dismayed; but I was both, and I told Warner that the project was doomed from the start; for while Greene had a certain talent as a writer of popular fiction, he had none of the qualities needed in an editor. Warner thought I was exaggerating the danger. I also felt that Connolly might feel offended by what would seem my officious intervention.

The explanation of this curious choice was that the financier was a Catholic who allowed his personal religious convictions to intrude into a purely literary affair and insisted on a Catholic editor. Anyhow, the money was paid and Mr. Greene delivered.

Night & Day was launched. It took on. *Punch* trembled for its circulation. For eleven months England had a literary magazine of first class quality. And then Mr. Greene killed it by a most extraordinary editorial negligence.

He had appointed himself his own film critic. This was dangerous, for there was no one to blue-pencil his copy. And in any case the cinema is not a serious occupation for a grown man — at least not the cinema we have, which caters for the great undiscriminating public. If his decision seems curious the reason may be found — apart from the fact that he could now see as many films as he liked, free — in Mr. Greene's austerely moral character. Moral, that is to say, in a highly special sense, a preoccupation with sin, but a preoccupation with sin in a very special context, sin being, as for most persons of an austerely moral character, the exercise of those functions which have, happily, been implanted in man for the propagation of the race.

As editor of a humorous magazine he seems to have thought it his duty to keep a moral eye on the cinema, which was known to deal sometimes with the exercise of this very sinful activity. He resorted one day to a cinema to do his duty, and the sensitive fibres of his moral being were brutally shaken by the film he saw, which apparently fulfilled all his forebodings. *Wee Willie Winkie*. As film critic he informed the readers of *Night & Day* that Fox Films in this film had prostituted the adolescent charms of Shirley Temple for the perverse gratification of elderly gentlemen in the stalls. As editor he passed the copy of his brilliant film critic for the printer; and thinking that the general public as well as his readers should be warned against Mr. Fox, this infamous *souteneur*, he had some purple posters printed — purple being, I suppose, the favourite colour of sexual passion with the popular novelists — lettered 'Sex & Shirley Temple' in large letters. They appeared that afternoon in the streets of London, and one of them met the astonished eye of the London agent of Fox Films. He bought a copy of *Night & Day* and read its film critic's appreciation of *Wee Willie Winkie*. It seemed to him to be a reflection on the reputation of Fox Films, and this view was shared by his legal adviser, who informed Chatto & Windus that a writ would be issued for defamation and that a large — a very large — sum would be demanded as damages.

The Board of Chatto & Windus met that evening and made the unhappy discovery that by an oversight they had not legally separated *Night & Day* from Chatto & Windus, so that they were themselves personally and collectively liable for the enormous damages that would be demanded. Not only would they be totally ruined, but the old and celebrated firm of Chatto & Windus would disappear and the promising career of *Night & Day* be brought to an end. It was a heavy price to pay for Mr. Greene's moral rectitude. They realised that there could be no possible defence

to the charge, and that if Fox Films brought an action they would undoubtedly win it and be given heavy damages, for the defamation was so purposed, so unequivocal, so scandalous and probably so untrue that it could be neither condoned or justified. They threw themselves humbly on the mercy of Fox Films, who very generously withdrew their writ, asked only a moderate sum to be given to a named charity and an apology inserted in the principal newspapers. That was the end of *Night & Day*.

There is an epilogue to this true story. In my diary at the time I naturally recorded this lamentable fulfilment of my prophecy, and when, many years later extracts from the diary were printed, this account was included but reduced to a strictly factual one, and my unfavourable comments on Mr. Greene were removed. All the same, the publishers thought it proper and prudent to submit the extract to Mr. Greene and to ask him if it were correct. He replied that it was not. Naturally, on receiving this assurance from so well-known and popular a novelist as Mr. Greene the publishers suppressed the story.

[Richard Pennington, author of *Peterley Harvest*, now lives in France.]

THE TRAIN

by Sarah Sallon

THE train from Jerusalem's 'Tachanat HaRakefet' (railway station) to Tel Aviv 'Drom' (T.A. South) is something between myth and mystery. For most inhabitants of the Holy City, the old Ottoman building on the Hebron road is a distant reminder of a vanished empire. A time of undrained swamps and pious Jews in black frock coats and moth eaten schtreimels. A time of pompous Turkish Beys and British officers with their crinolined wives surveying the Empire from the luxury of an upholstered Pullman carriage.

And so it was in those far off days that 'the train' was the faithful servant of the colonialists: whether transferring troops to restless Baghdad or carrying porcelain complexioned ladies and gentlemen to winter in Alexandria, there was the train — loyal, reliable and powerful.

And so it is that 100 years later in our own bustling modern times the train, brimming with memories and past glories, has been shunted down a side track, left to brood on its heroic feats, and its sorry fall from grace.

And then there was a new Minister of Transport. Maybe as a child his doting father nurturing this bright Knesset star-to-be, brought home a train set... one that simply went 'round and round, but with signals and matchbox houses, and grazing wooden sheep, and a wonderful little control box, so that with a flick of the finger, the train would screech to a halt just as a painted cow sauntered over the tracks.

And many years later when the new Minister, handsome and suave, entered his Elysium, the Ministry of Transport, trains throughout the Holy Land, languishing in sheds and sidings, smelt redemption.

'Until further notice these are the times of trains from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, return — 7.30 (commuters special), 12.15 (holiday-makers and others), 4.30 (home just in time for dinner).' Three trains a day! Who would come? Who would voluntarily leave the fraternity of the road with its air-conditioned buses, Mercedes taxis, and untold numbers of private cars, its six-laned highways, traffic jams, daily carnage, short tempers, and the smell of gasoline — for a train, a museum piece, a distant reminder of repressive and servile times.

'Tel Aviv. Who's for Tel Aviv?' It seems a strange question to ask the dense little queue knotted around the solitary ticket window. There is only one train and one destination.

'Pay on the train, pay on the train.' The ticket inspector, dressed quite officially for an Israeli, herds us down the platform. We climb the steep rungs up to the carriage — time only for farewells — a last long wave. Are we really only going to 'Tel Aviv Drom?' Or have we, by some celestial accident passed through time and politics and are on our way instead across Sinai and Suez to Cairo?

The train, dusted out of retirement for our journey, is a very simple

creature — no bar or restaurant, no first class carriages, no padded reclining seats with headrests and little tables in between. Our carriage is all blue and white, with blue plastic hard upright seats, rattling windows and dark blue lino floors. But the train is full, almost bursting with children — little girls with ringlets and black eyes, and families of Hassidim, white skins and payes — all screaming with excitement, clinging to the windows, racing up and down the aisle. The train is a five compartment long, sinuous, magnificent game which we shall play all the way to 'Tel Aviv Drom'.

We glide out of Jerusalem, past the backside of the German Colony with its elegant stone houses and potted plants, and further along through less elegant concrete housing estates and washing lines, and further still around the back of the new sports stadium which most of us have only glimpsed at from the road. And all these familiar spots seem curiously out of perspective.

So we rattle along, and around and through the mountains that surround the Holy City. We're following a stream, one that meanders leisurely through the valleys. Did I say a stream? When David played hide and seek with Saul he might have swum in its deliciously clear waters. When the Temple was still burning our ancestors may have hidden in those caves and this little stream was their life blood. Even the British, who built this masterpiece of engineering, would have enjoyed a good splash now and then. But that was a long time ago, and the stream has another function now — to carry the effluent of the citizens all the way from Jerusalem to Bet Shemesh — gallons and gallons of undiluted excrement pouring out from Jerusalem, turning the stream into a dark brown muddy river whose smell follows us — down and down and down, through these lovely hills.

The first warning of approaching Bet Shemesh is a soft white powder. It covers the olive trees, the cars, the streets, the Bedouin tents, even the goats have a greyish look about them. Stones, those highly prized Jerusalem ones used to beautify our beautiful city, are casually plucked from these quarries leaving terrible gashes in this ancient landscape.

Bet Shemesh station is a terminus. Here our single line track momentarily divides itself, allowing the oncoming 12.15 from Tel Aviv Drom to pass. Dead on Schedule, an elderly diesel with identical blue and white coaches pulls into tiny Bet Shemesh station and for a moment we lie side by side, surveying each other. Everyone is cheering and waving, mothers hanging out of the windows, sheitels askew. 'Shalom, shalom. We're from Tel Aviv, Tel Aviv . . .!' The train is bursting with children.

Slowly the carriages draw apart and I speculate on another reason for the bitter exile of the train by our founding fathers. Could the sight of so many Jews carried off to faraway places have reminded them in a shadowy sort of way, of other transports, of journeys to nowhere, and the train in its past incarnations as more than a colonial slave, but an accomplice to that crime, condemned like its master to obscurity.

We pass on now through flatter rocky countryside and shady forests

and here's a tiny station — 'Na'an', with no ticket office or waiting room, just a yellow and green plastic shelter and a ragged Israeli flag. Pausing for a minute in the afternoon sun — our train gathers its breath, preparing itself for the hot, sticky coastal plain ahead.

Ramle appears in the distance, a solitary proud minaret, and an old fashioned clockhouse. Ramle was once an Arab town, and even now, squeezed in between the housing estates are a few crumbling, Ottoman buildings, all arched windows and graceful curves.

A trail of rubbish leads us out of Ramle and into Lod, or Lydda, as it was once known. Lod is a real station. Although the platform is deserted, there are neat signs for 'Ladies' and 'Gentlemen' toilets, shabby plastic benches, and lots and lots of track. Surely this must be a major terminus? We wait quietly for the old fashioned signals to change, expecting any moment the freight from Dimona or passengers from Haifa to hurtle past us. Nothing moves but a solitary horn rings out in the silence, like a dying albatross, and with a little shudder, we move on.

The inhabitants of the Ayalon region of the Holy Land, once the territory of the tribe of 'Dan', have discovered an original way to beautify the countryside. Abandoned cars, of every type, valuables stripped away and all a uniform rust-brown colour, have been placed neatly along the fields, lining the railway track, to merge at Kfar Chabad with the town's own refuse.

Arising from this wasteland is a magnificent building, an exact replica replica of a Brooklyn town house, several stories high. Red bricked with many windows, it gazes out across the fields and the rubbish, over the Village of Chabad, waiting for the moment when the Rebbe of Lubavitch, or the Messiah, which ever comes first, will take up his earthly H.Q. in the Holy Land. I wish him luck manoeuvering his snow-white donkey, proceeded by the prophet Elijah, through this mountain of accumulated refuse.

Now Jaffa rolls into sight, and we are travelling through the centre of a six-lane highway, with cars racing each other and our little locomotive, past what seems to be a magnificent Tel — a great archeological mound, millenial deep — the Tel of Tel Aviv. I look closer, for the familiar bus loads of tourists and information kiosks that always accompany ancient sites in Israel. But there is nothing except a few screaming crows circling above and the by now familiar smell of garbage.

And finally our faithful train slows, and an empty platform, with flowers growing between the cracks and a great concrete 'hanger' welcomes us 'Tel Aviv Drom'. Families pour out, into the sunshine taking time to thank the driver for a wonderful and unforgettable journey and asking him politely if Moshie and Leah, and Rivkele and Sorele, can have a look, just for a minute, at the insides of their diesel playfellow.

The driver, a bored, sweaty man with a golden fist hanging from his neck, yawns, as the children of Israel and several of their friends swarm aboard. And the mothers of Rivkele and Sorele and Leah remind their daughters once again that, 'No, nicely brought up Jewish girls can't be train drivers!' At least not until the Messiah comes.

Literary Supplement

THE FIRST TV WAR

From the House of War: John Simpson in the Gulf. Hutchinson. 390pp. £13.99.

This is the first record of a war seen with the eyes of the TV camera as well as with that of a seasoned reporter and analyst with an independent mind. It therefore merits the attention of anyone interested in world affairs. It instantly raises the obvious question whether reporters and TV cameras will in future be allowed the same, though restricted, activities the author and his camera team were able to exploit.

An attractive feature of the book is Simpson's urge, and ability, to describe with a painter's accuracy and imagination some of the scenes he saw, scenes of environment, like his last look at the Customs Post on the Jordan border before finally leaving Iraq. Simpson makes no bones about summing up his media colleagues and his Iraqi contacts which gives one an intriguing impression of competition among the hacks and of news management. It was, and still is, a unique situation because some of the media of the countries fighting Iraq were allowed to report from inside the country, subject, of course, to Iraqi news management. This brought Simpson into a hostile personal clash with Arnett, the famous reporter of the US CNN network which Saddam Hussein was reliably reported to be watching in every one of his bunkers. There is also the curious episode of Simpson being refused an interview with Saddam Hussein because the BBC insisted on retaining the right to edit it whereupon it went to Trevor McDonald of ITN where it was shown fully. Simpson is full of praise for colleagues who took risks or coolly bypassed restrictions imposed on them on the Allied side. Of course, reporters on the spot missed facts and events only casually and partially revealed like the burying of trenchfuls of Iraqi soldiers alive by advancing US armour with their bulldozers.

Simpson spent months in Iraq before the Allied invasion and was present during the first dramatic bombings. His views are firm and straightforward. Saddam risked the war because he felt certain that the Americans would not sustain even reasonable casualties even in the medium term. He did not appreciate and take into account the new equipment and weaponry the Americans would use and nobody dared tell him anyway.

He is, Simpson asserts, a cunning, ruthless and paranoid leader who has retained the ambition to be the Great Arab Leader and will therefore adjust only at the last moment as his dispatch of the Iraqi Air Force to Iran shows. He will try nearly everything but will stop at nothing to ensure the survival of his regime. Simpson reports all the lurid killings Saddam committed himself or permitted. He insists, however, that the ordinary Iraqis, most of the soldiers and many of the officers silently loathe Saddam and wish his death. But as long as Saddam controls his Republican Guards and his Political Police, recruited largely from his own Sunni district of Takrit in central Iraq, he can survive although he has to purge ruthlessly time and again as the sacking of Premier Hammadi in September shows.

Simpson, like so many others, is critical, to put it mildly, of the decision of President Bush to stop the fighting when General Schwarzkopf was just 48 hours before final success that would have brought Saddam down. He gives a distressing summary of Saddam's savage victory over the Shi'ite rebels in the South and over the Kurds in the North afterwards. Events like Saddam

confidently shrugging off much of the UN investigations of his nuclear and chemical warfare arsenals show that Simpson's honest doubts are being proved right.

It does imply that the 'Great Victory' of the Allies is being undermined at every opportunity Saddam can see and it does not seem to worry him that food and medicines for the ordinary Iraqis are running short because his actions only prolong UN sanctions that are gradually being relaxed anyhow.

Simpson also gives a hard-nosed description of the regime of Kuwait with the Emir's family not coming out at all well. It is curious that Saddam's virtual destruction of Kuwait's, and part of Saudi, environment by the burning of 600 oil wells that will take decades to repair, if at all, has not been taken into account in the acceptance by the Allies of Saddam's successful survival.

Simpson's book is a lively confirmation of the thought that Saddam would never burst into tears when sending his men into battle as President Bush said he did on the occasion. Every chapter in the book is introduced by a quotation from Saddam's sayings.

LEO MURAY

LEADERSHIP — OR THE REVERSE?

A Question of Leadership. Peter Clarke. Hamish Hamilton. £17.99.

Peter Clarke has written a sparkling account of Britain's political leaders over the last century. Ten were prime ministers (Gladstone, Salisbury, Asquith, Lloyd George, Chamberlain, Churchill, Attlee, Macmillan, Wilson and Thatcher) and four came close (Joe Chamberlain, Dalton, Bevan and Gaitskell); one, not a politician, set an agenda for a generation (Keynes). The skeleton is provided by the diaries, memoirs or commentaries that they, or a legion of participants and commentators, left behind; these published works (some twenty are drawn on for each of the thirteen chapters) are cited at the end; but there are no footnotes. Some of his material has already been used as book reviews; if he borrows many familiar *bon-mots* from his subjects, he adds many welcome flashes of his own. Thus from Peter Jenkins he draws the description of sunny Jim Callaghan as 'The Keeper of the Cloth Cap'. Of Hugh Dalton, whose motto was 'belligerency at all times', he writes that his attitude to Churchill 'was just this side of idolatry; alas, the great man reciprocated with a lack of warmth that was just this side of disdain'. Again, Ernest Bevin in 1947 'summoned the New World into action to redress the bank balance of the Old'. Macmillan's ruthless calculation wore 'the mask of nonchalance'. This is a zesty, witty and topical survey.

A biographical approach promotes readability, and facilitates verdicts. Thus, of the Prime Ministers, neither Baldwin nor Macdonald, neither Wilson nor Callaghan merit chapters of their own here; which perhaps saves the author from libel actions, since his comments on the last two in particular are especially savage. Of the post-World War II politicians, only Mrs. Thatcher emerges as a leader whose stature matches that of Gladstone or Lord Salisbury. The one non-politician to merit inclusion, J. M. Keynes, is seen as 'Academic Scribbler or Political Dabbler'. He could with equal truth have been seen as the only self-made millionaire, though not the only homosexual, of the many characters described here.

In all its vividness, a purely biographical treatment of a century of unparalleled change distorts even as — or is it because? — it dramatises. The loss of life in World War I, the economic cost of World War II, the remorseless decline of heavy industry, the debate over Europe, and the legacy of Empire

were far more important in shaping Britain's history than any single politician, however distinguished. If 'leadership', however defined, is the criterion, is not its absence the striking feature of British politics after 1945? It was not only Harold Wilson who was guilty of 'fudging and mudging', of hedging and fencing. And it is the sharp analyses of the ambitions and greed of little men endowed for a time with a 'little brief authority' and an often-fictitious fame, that leaves a bitter taste behind.

ESMOND WRIGHT

A HEAD TO BREAK ROCKS

Stanley: Sorcerer's Apprentice. Frank McLynn. Constable 1991, 499pp. £25.00.

It is important to remember that Stanley was far the greatest of African 19th century explorers: his triple traverse of the uncharted and hellish Ituri rain forests; his unique double crossing of Africa from East to West, and West to East, themselves give him that title. Yet he stays in the popular mind irredeemably mixed with Livingstone and Leopold, and with the latter, liberal assumptions of atrocity.

Certainly, anyone starting on Volume 2 (1877-1904) could be understandably confused as it plunges straight into the maelstrom of mistrust, spite, double cross and holy backbiting that so shadows 19th century exploration. Indeed a better title for this book, the sequel to *Stanley, the making of an African Explorer,* might have been 'Bula Matari': the African name for Stanley — a head to break rocks. For the reader is less amazed at his alleged psychological and schizo difficulties, than that he ever remained sane at all.

McLynn's general thesis seems to be that while Livingstone was the good fairy of Volume 1, Leopold became the evil genius of Volume 2. It starts with the 999-day crossing of Africa ending in 1877, which led to an enormous increase of European interest, whether for political gain, trade or religion. From the time of his return to Europe in 1878 Stanley was stalked by Leopold II, who used him in the regrettable Brussels (1878) and Berlin (1885) conferences. These, under the guise of humanitarianism, and gulled by a brilliant public relations exercise, handed the huge area of the Congo to Leopold, King of the Belgians as his personal fief with unfettered sovereignty. Conflicting Anglo-French, Anglo-German and Anglo-Portuguese interests rose murkily to the surface, and Stanley, who dreamed of a British protectorate and a railway across central Africa, despaired.

Stanley, eventually tiring of Leopold's duplicity, found a new focus for his energy in the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition 1886-9. The unbelievable horrors of this journey and the loss of life turned it into a dreadful farce. The Emin, who had followed Gordon as Governor of Equatoria, was born Schwitzler, a Bavarian doctor who had embraced Islam. Although he had asked for help, by the time Stanley reached him in April 1888, the Emin no longer wanted to leave. There was no rapport between this short-sighted naturalist and Stanley; he was not another Livingstone. But Stanley who had failed to bring Livingstone home, was determined to get the Emin out willy nilly.

After a dreadful journey to the coast where new complications arose, the Emin, after a too convivial party, fell out of a window and was whisked away to a German hospital, and never again left the clutches of his compatriots. He re-appeared as a German agent and was finally murdered in the Congo in 1892. It transpired he was also hiding from a German wife he had left destitute. His activities began to make Stanley's rescue seem ridiculous, expensive and unnecessary. He was already tormented by bright young journ-

alists from New York (one tried to cycle across Africa and to ride a mustang over Russia). However, despite law suits, fever and exhaustion, Stanley left for Europe on January 1st 1890, stopping only in Egypt to produce *In Darkest Africa*. This feat he achieved in 50 days (900 pages or 8,000 words a day).

He came back to England to an apogee of academic honours, knighthood, tours to America and Australia. He also married Dorothy Tennant, who put an end to African adventure. Stanley became an MP, but despite the public distinction of later years his star dimmed under the not always accurate accusations of complicity in Leopold's Congo atrocities. In 1904, at 63 more bored than exhausted, Stanley died. A small minded ecclesiastic denied him the Abbey, and he was buried at Pirbright. He would have preferred Africa.

MOLLY MORTIMER

THE BRITISH POLITICAL NOVEL

The Centre of Things: Political Fiction in Britain from Disraeli to the Present. Christopher Harvie. Unwin Hyman. 1991. 245pp.

This is an excellent survey of the British political novel. Despite its sub-title it deals briefly with a number of Disraeli's predecessors in the genre, including William Godwin, John Galt and Robert Plumer Ward, and its survey of novelists who have followed in Disraeli's footsteps is comprehensive enough for a text-book. But this is much more than a text-book. In its closing chapter it comes close to being an essay on the current political situation in the United Kingdom, and from the very beginning it is studded with striking insights into the political processes behind institutional politics.

It may be indeed that Harvie is more impressive on the politics of political fiction than on the fiction. A scholarly work of this sort cannot be expected to be greater than its subject, and in the end one feels that the political novel, qua novel, comes rather low down on the list of the glories of English (or British) Literature. Harvie recognizes the importance, within the tradition of political fiction, of Benjamin Disraeli; but though Disraeli's novels injected a new dimension into politics, and contained a wealth of memorable polemic and historical myth-making, as literature they are, how shall we put it? not exactly Shakespeare. In his analysis of the 'Golden Age' of the political novel, Harvie asserts that George Eliot's *Felix Holt* 'is fundamental to our whole enterprise', and yet many critics would regard it as George Eliot's weakest novel, always excepting *Romola*. Personally I find it has a quality not possessed by George Eliot's other English novels: forgettability. Again, Trollope has an important part in Harvie's presentation, but it is questionable whether the Palliser novels are Trollope's best work — though Harvie also has interesting things to say about the Barchester novels. It is possible that Harvie recognizes this problem of literary quality. He refers to Joyce Cary's 'Chester Nimmo' trilogy as 'the most impressive novel of modern British politics' (p.156) but says nothing more about it, as if implying that even the best may be beneath discussion.

Perhaps part of the problem is that conventional notions of the novel genre, or of 'literature', are not entirely helpful when dealing with political fiction. Disraeli in *Coningsby* and *Sybil*, and H. G. Wells in *Tono-Bungay* and *The New Machiavelli*, appeared to be aiming at something that was beyond their capacity as novelists, yet the results have a vigour, and a kind of urgency and integrity, that gives them a stature independent of their quality as literature. This is because politics, amongst all the really important themes in life — love,

death, war, money — is the one most involved in words: the only one which could conceivably be enlarged in scope by the use of words. Disraeli and H. G. Wells attempted such an enlargement, and even if their words, as words, seem inadequate and their politics, as politics, seem hopelessly dated, there is something exciting in the attempt.

Harvie argues against presenting the politics of the political novel as simply the institutionalized politicking centred on Parliament. Part of his theme, in fact, is the relationship between parliamentary politics and the political awareness of those sections of society that are not admitted to the corridors of power. But there is a problem here too, for the politics of those for whom politics is not a career belong to the continuum of their experiences as moral entities, and is therefore part of the subject matter of literature as a whole, not merely of the political novel. Harvie does not mention *Silas Marner* or *Great Expectations*, but they are probably better novels than any he discusses: and it can hardly be said that they have no political dimension. One notes also that Harvie has nothing to say about science fiction, much of which is political (even explicitly so) and some of which is by British writers.

One final cavil. Harvie begins his book by quoting a passage from *The Prime Minister*, by Trollope, which contains 'a discussion of political ideology' which, Harvie says, could 'only be conveyed by fiction'. It seems to me the passage is exactly the sort of thing one finds in private letters, memoirs and political polemics. As Harvie goes on to make very clear, political fiction is a part of a general political discourse. On the whole I should say it was one of the most opaque, ambiguous and misleading aspects of political discourse. The least that can be said of Harvie's book is that it both stimulates and assists us to give this aspect of political discourse a closer examination.

A. D. HARVEY

SYLVIA PLATH AND FANTASY

The Haunting of Sylvia Plath. Jacqueline Rose. Virago Press. £14.95.

One of the strangest of the Sylvia Plath mysteries is the masochism of those biographers and commentators who are powerfully drawn to her (Jacqueline Rose: 'she haunts me') yet know that, in exegesis, they must voluntarily come into collision with the dragon at the gate of the Plath castle — the Estate. Ms. Rose, soon to take up a chair in English at Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, puts up a spirited and well-argued defence of the right to analyse. Apparently the Estate has found her appreciative study 'evil', especially where sexual identity is touched upon. As a matter of fact, Ms. Rose's work, not biography, but textual criticism, of its essence psycho-analytical in its every direction, is extremely abstruse, and shall be blameless of any imagined evil influence. The author, even as she examines the disputatious area of 'The Archive' and the relation of the text to truth and fact is herself netted in the hostilities. Not taking a pronounced feminist view of the Plath corpus, although feminism there is, hovering pervasively behind all the discussion, Ms. Rose elaborates the unexceptionable theme of Plath's use of fantasy (in the psycho-analytical sense). To this end, as inconsistent as Plath herself, she weaves a labyrinth of exploration. A final, binding-together chapter would not have gone amiss. The books on Sylvia Plath *will* go on appearing. The time for her to have been an icon of confessional or extremist poetry is long past, and the centrality of her poetic achievement was generally recognised with the late appearance in 1981 of the

Collected Poems.

It is still difficult not to dwell upon the life and death of Sylvia Plath, but it was wrong for her to have become a kind of *L'Inconnue de la Seine*, she who was dredged up from the river in the 1860s, her rictus mistaken for peace, and before whose death mask cultish students killed themselves.

MOLLY TIBBS

JONES THE LANGUAGES

The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones. Garland Cannon. Cambridge University Press. £40.00.

Professor Garland Cannon of Texas A. & M. University follows up his edition of Jones's letters with a carefully-researched biography of one of the first and probably the most gifted of British Orientalists. William Jones, a native of Anglesey, a Fellow of University College, Oxford, and a judge on the Welsh circuit, was more than a linguist — he spoke twelve European languages before he went to India and studied, he said, at least twenty-eight in all; he was lawyer, poet, botanist and comparative mythologist too, and — almost an under-secretary in Shelburne's Ministry, almost but not quite a Member of Parliament, and — in 1782 — almost an American. The years of the end of the War of American Independence presented a liberal and pro-American Whig with almost too many choices to make.

In his range, but not in his longevity, Jones suggests a comparison with Benjamin Franklin. Indeed, they were friends and correspondents; and Jones's wife, Anna Shipley, was one of the five daughters of Bishop Jonathan Shipley, to whom, on his visit to Twyford near Winchester in 1771, Franklin read the first draft of what became his *Autobiography*. Anna married Sir William in 1783, just before their departure to his Supreme Court judgeship in India.

Jones's career in India was especially distinguished by his Third Discourse (in 1786) to the Asiatic Society that he had helped to found, modelled on the Royal Society. In it he developed his thesis that Sanskrit 'both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar' had a 'strong affinity' with Latin and Greek, 'so strong indeed that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists'. For many linguists Jones's *Third Discourse* marks the beginning of modern linguistics.

By his books and articles Jones introduced India, its languages and its culture, to scholars and poets in the West. In India he was a man of total integrity, industry and dedication, a model lawyer and scholar who spent his life in its service. He had only ten years to give — he died aged 47 in 1794, and sent Anna home ahead of him because of her frequent spells of ill-health in the Indian summers. Professor Cannon, in a masterly and loving portrait, has one savage and jarring paragraph condemning 'British oppression' in India. He may be correct in his view of the government of Bengal, Bombay and Madras in the 1780s, although he exempts Warren Hastings from his (and Edmund Burke's partisan) strictures. But perhaps Jones's career attests to that other American view of the British in India, that of George Santayana of Harvard, who thought that in comparison with other Empires and other sovereignties, Britain's was 'the sweetest, justest and most boyish Empire the World had ever seen'.

ESMOND WRIGHT

PACIFIC IDENTITY

The Pacific. Simon Winchester. Hutchinson, 1991, 501pp. £19.99.

The Things we do for England — if only England Knew. Eric Bevington. Laverham Press, 1990. £5.00.

Simon Winchester does his best to hammer home the numbing size of the Pacific; his book itself is an American type blockbuster of 501 pages crammed full of fact. The Pacific covers a third of the world's surface, more than the total land surface; nearly sixty countries are within its area and over half the worlds population. Atlases which used to show the Pacific as a rim, now depict it centrally. We are given a swooping tour from Tonga, where time begins, on the international date line, to Stout Cortez land; from Tahiti and California to China. But in all this diversity, Mr. Winchester sees a growing identity. After maps, chaps. His historical perspective sees mankind, after the Mediterranean era, and the Atlantic, moving fast into a time when power and politics centre in the Pacific countries. The fight for control, already in full swing, lies between the two technical giants, America and Japan. From the 19th century dream of the Pacific as a Japanese lake to American thrusting manifest destiny is a hairbreadth of history. Mr. Winchester goes into details of these two countries not always directly relevant to the Pacific, at the expense of other areas. Australia is scattered in to two chapters, the Queensland outback and the largest iron mine in the world at Newman, West Australia. Gough Whitlam summed up his country's relation to the Pacific: in the 19th century we were a farm for Britain; now we are a quarry for Japan in the GABA (Great Australian Bugger All). New Zealand hardly gets a mention; and despite a nostalgic glimpse at Hong Kong, and its particular British magic, there is astonishingly no mention of the Commonwealth and its influence at all. Yet many unviable island communities might not survive without its long term work. The Medical School and University in Fiji have been of incalculable value for nearly a hundred years.

Mr. Winchester puts forward the interesting theme that the future really lies in the hands of the ubiquitous Chinese and Confucianism. As an ethic for a disciplined way of life it is liable to survive and without conflict with the Christian, Islamic and Buddhist religions. The subject is so vast and varied that despite his anecdotal best, this book lacks a real human touch. All the more reason to enjoy 'The Things We do for England', written in the pure Arthur Grimble (Pattern of Islands) style. Indeed he had preceded Eric Bevington as DO in the Gilbert Islands. Both have a sense of the ludicrous which carried them through Treasury bureaucratese and local ghosts. The story of the Pontoon and its 53 dollars has a chapter to itself. The Penal system also called for a light touch where prison carried no stigma. Indeed the police who supervised working parties quickly taught the prisoners their skills; prison was so much of a training ground that the first question applicants for jobs were asked: 'Have you been in prison?'.

Many wise people quoted by the author, including Laurens van der Post and the Prime Minister of Fiji, Sir Kamisese Mara, are beginning to appreciate the value and values of the Commonwealth and Empire. This little book adds a lighthearted footnote.

MOLLY MORTIMER

SHORTER REVIEWS

The Economy Under Mrs. Thatcher. (Penguin. £5.99.) Christopher Johnson was Chief Economic adviser to Lloyds Bank throughout the 'Thatcher years' and has written previous books on the British economy. His book considers: economic growth, inflation, public expenditure, taxation, privatisation, industrial performance and labour. His over-all conclusion: the government's record resembled the curate's famous egg. They succeeded and were able, for example, to reform trade unions, cut income tax and increase home ownership. They failed to increase savings, halt inflation and wage demands and actually raised the tax burden on the lower paid through increases in VAT. Like the headmaster one might say: 'Good but could do better'. This is an extremely worthwhile and readable survey. (J.M.)

The Religion of the Ancient Celts. (Constable. £12.95.) This is a reprint of J. A. MacCulloch's 1911 book and is part of a series devoted to Celtic themes. The book discusses various aspects of Celtic religions and does not confine itself to England: it includes Ireland and Gaul as well as the Welsh. It is extremely readable and still a valuable source. Other books in the series discuss the Celtic empire, Celtic remains and the Celts' legends and art. (J.M.)

Henry II. (Methuen. £12.99 pb.) This reprint (hardback and paperback) of Professor W. L. Warren's famous 1973 biography of Henry II is the sixth publication in Methuen's 'English Monarchs' series which is edited by Professor J. J. Scarisbrick. It is very welcome since the last paperback edition appeared in 1977. Henry II remains one of our most famous and least understood monarchs. In popular memory he is associated with the martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket. To historians he stands as something of an enigma whose vibrant personality stamped itself on English history and English institutions. This new edition has a postscript where developments in work on Henry II since 1973 are reviewed and a supplement to the bibliography which acknowledges new works. Overall, however, Professor Warren says that he has 'not found it necessary to change my interpretation . . . in any fundamental way'. This new and revised edition of a great classic is a worthy part of this extremely worthwhile series. (J.M.)

Robert Louis Stevenson: The Collected Shorter Fiction. (Robinson Publishing. £19.95.) This is the first collection of the shorter works of Stevenson and is superbly edited by Dr. Peter Stoneley, who also provides a valuable eight page introduction. In compiling the collection Dr. Stoneley has included all of Stevenson's fiction, under 50,000 words in length and has used, whenever possible, the text of the Tusitala edition, the most readily available. There are some silent corrections and insertions to correct obvious omissions in earlier editions. The collection includes not just the most famous works, like the 'Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' but lesser known works which are needed to make a sound judgement on Stevenson as a writer. As Dr. Stoneley concludes in his introduction, the 'stories collected here reassert his (Stevenson's) claims as a representative author, whose work is always skilful and entertaining, and some of which has deservedly achieved classic status.' (J.M.)

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Contents

		Page
Helping the Children of Romania	Valérie Ceccherini	281
Five Days in a National Health Hospital	Eric Glasgow	285
Poem: Home	Paul Mackintosh	289
Britain's Invisible Exports	David Lammie	290
Botswana's Silver Jubilee: A Quarter Century of Democracy and Development	John A. Wiseman	294
Son of the Soil	Raymond Tong	298
South Asia Takes a Big Step Towards Disarmament	Thomas Land	305
The War Poets of 1639: Carew, Suckling and Lovelace	Donald Bruce	309
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec — Grandeur and Misery	Muriel Julius	315
Christmas with Queen Victoria	James Munson	319
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT		326
John McGurk, Nick Chadwick, A. L. Rowse, Rodney Aitchtey, Cornelia Oddie, A. D. Harvey, Esmond Wright.		
Shorter Reviews		335
Half-Yearly Index		336

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HELPING THE CHILDREN OF ROMANIA

by Valérie Ceccherini

THE Romanian revolution of December 1989 remains uncompleted. Under the mask of democracy, the government of ex-communists allows a 'docile' opposition. The whole economy is in complete chaos, misery generates anarchy. In September, Bucharest saw more rioting. Life is getting more unbearable and the anger of the Romanian population is very likely to erupt once again.

I recently went to Romania with Médecins Du Monde (Doctors of the World — a French voluntary agency) in order to follow their work and progress. Since 1989, one of the many MDM missions, which have spread throughout Romania, deals with the maternity hospital of Mehedinti — a Romanian county of 350,000 residents. This institute is situated in Drobeta-Turnu-Severin, a small industrial town on the borderline with Yugoslavia.

All the roads around Drobeta are dangerous undulating tracks or real quagmires. The population is packed in block-houses which are dull and completely dilapidated. Like the rest of Romania, the sanitation needs to be entirely refitted. All pipes leak and water flows into the basements and remains stagnant. This generates swarms of insects (billions of mosquitos) and a proliferation of rats. In Drobeta, people have only four hours hot water a week. Therefore, hygiene and heating conditions worsen and numerous epidemics appear: whooping cough, hepatitis and tuberculosis (the tuberculosis rate is presently the highest in Europe). Misery is everywhere while shortages are general and permanent.

To live — or I'd rather say to survive — Romanians spend their days queuing up in front of shops which are most of the time empty. They seek food, soap, petrol and clothes. Sometimes a product suddenly disappears from the market for several months; then, the black-market takes over. People swap, negotiate and 'smartness' becomes the rule of the game.

The maternity hospital of Mehedinti stands there, in the middle of this setting of dust and despair. This building looks dark and sad. It is an institute which was built seventy years ago in order to be used as an hotel (but actually, it has always been used as a medical institute) and therefore its structures are not adapted to its real function. For ten years, in order to refit it, the medical saff has regularly applied to the Government for grants, but in vain. The maternity hospital comprises twenty-six bedrooms (120 beds) for adults and seven bedrooms (50 beds) for children. Due to

lack of space, lots of patients cannot be admitted and new-born children are separated from their mothers. Very often, one single bed is used for up to three patients or new-born children.

Floors are covered with filth, plaster falls into pieces, taps are defective, walls ooze dampness and corridors are dark — no more light bulbs can be found on the market. About ten patients must use the same single bathroom and toilet. Medicine cabinets are empty and the only medical material available is thirty years old. The hospitals lack basic supplies such as antibiotics, disinfectants, syringes and nappies for new-born children. The premature babies department has no breast pumps. So, to feed their tiny babies, women squeeze and pull their breasts — which get covered with bruises — until they empty them. Due to malnutrition, most of the patients and newborn children suffer from anaemia. Because of the shortage of suitable medicines, doctors are totally helpless.

Today in Romania, it is almost impossible to find any contraceptives; for the greater part of the population, contraception is still taboo. Thus, since abortion has been legalized after the revolution, the main function of maternity hospitals is to abort. For the year 1990, the county of Mehedinti registered 12,000 abortions. The maternity hospital of Drobeta does some fifty abortions a day. Some women abort almost regularly, up to four times a year; for one wanted and successful pregnancy, ten abortions are registered. In these dreadful conditions abortions cause serious infections. Moreover, as anaesthetics are in very short supply, most of the abortions are performed without them.

Dr. Boursin, one of the Médecins du Monde team, explains: 'The situation of Drobeta maternity hospital is still the same... always very bad. We try to help them, bringing medical material from France (ultrasound-scanners, essential medicines, etc.) and we also try to help the local medical staff when dealing with anaesthesia and resuscitation treatments. Nevertheless, in Romania nothing really important has changed... Maternity hospitals and health in general reflect outside life. The new problem we now have to face is the abortion rate increase. In less than one year's time, the abortion rate has doubled. We do our best to provide contraceptive supplies — we have brought 1,500 coils to Drobeta maternity hospital — but it is absolutely imperative to set up, throughout the whole country, an efficient system of contraception'. The Romanian Ministry of Health is preparing an informative campaign and a contraceptives distribution project. MDM doctors hope those plans will soon be put in concrete form.

Within the whole county of Mehedinti there is one doctor per 2,000 residents. The local medical staff works using archaic methods and in many cases, reveals itself unskilled — among other things, they absolutely do not know how to treat an emergency. Medical education itself is also in a state of crisis: medical books and journals are missing. Romanian medical knowledge is thirty years behind the times. Dr. Boursin told me: 'We are training local staff. Actually, since the summer of 1990, we regularly welcome, in France, Romanian gynaecologists and paediatricians to offer them some training periods within Western European hospitals'.

In order to follow the progress of children's health and development when back with their families, MDM and the Romanian Health Services have together planned to establish, within the county, an 'after-maternity hospital' providing medical service and supervision. The staff to put this plan into action, will be mid-wives and nurses from France. They will train Romanians to enable them to take over.

Ceausescu's policy demanded that Romanian families have four or five children. With contraception illegal, lots of children were abandoned. Many women tried to perform abortions themselves and therefore many children were born disabled. The Ceausescu regime established special institutes for all the unwanted children of the country — normal or disabled — who were homeless. According to Ceausescu, they were 'irredeemable'. Today, Romania has more than 100,000 'orphans'. Despite sincere willingness, the government cannot afford more than 25 pence a day for each child.

French humanitarian agencies are dealing with twenty-three 'psychiatric hospitals' for children, meanwhile other nations, including the United Kingdom, are helping others. Nevertheless, a lot has still to be done and some of these 'institutes for death' are still completely ignored and are not helped by humanitarian agencies. Dr. Recoing, a doctor working for the French voluntary agency 'Equilibre', explained what he discovered last January, when he arrived in one of these institutes: 'Children were living there with no heating at all, and during winter they had to endure temperatures such as fifty degrees below zero. They were permanently lying down — three or even five in one single bed — and they were left for months in their own excrement. Their blankets were some old dirty rags. The staff were domestic-helpers who never talked to them. They had no fresh water — we have now one tap for the whole hospital — when we came, they were using a well which contained water full of faecal substances. The bathroom was dreadful: patients were going there, barefooted, to empty their buckets into toilets which were already overflowing; and thus, the whole bathroom became completely covered with excrement. The stench was unbearable — a smell of putrefaction. Children were fed like animals: two potatoes with water, or ox bones — big as fists — for a two year old child'.

All the patients' files which have been found by humanitarian agencies in these institutes were completely made up; many patients had never been examined by any doctor. Dr. Recoing said: 'I have seen a child's file on which was stated: "good development; healthy". He is twelve years old and weighs 2.2 stones; his legs and arms are as thick as a chair's bars. He is permanently bent in the foetal position and his thorax is enormous: he obviously suffers from rickets'.

Ceausescu and his government managed to keep those institutes in absolute secrecy. Thus, Romanians only discovered the nightmare of their country's orphanages and psychiatric hospitals when Westerners did.

Another MDM mission deals with the ten orphanages which stand in the county of Hunedoara (600,000 residents) in Transylvania. This mission comprises twenty teachers and some doctors. They told me the difficulties

they were facing when they try to solve problems in children's hospitals and orphanages. The first emergency was to refit the buildings themselves: wiring, sanitation, etc. The doctors then examined all the children one by one. Some are perfectly normal, some are mentally or physically disabled and others are outcasts. Nevertheless, they have been locked up all together for years, some since their birth, in the same rooms and completely cut off from the outside world. Often it is difficult to establish a diagnosis. Doctors discovered that some children who were 'deaf-and-dumb' can hear perfectly and are able to learn to talk; and that some others who were 'physically disabled' were found to be totally capable of moving their whole body.

One MDM doctor told me about the great aim their mission is trying to achieve: 'We must divide the children into small groups, according to their medical problems. In addition, we have to rescue them from neuroleptic injections which local psychiatrists, because of ignorance and incompetence, do administer very excessively and improperly'.

Local medical staff suffer from serious gaps in psychiatric and psychological knowledge. A Belgian MDM doctor told me: 'The most terrible house we have is a clean building; but the children stay permanently in bed. They do not learn how to talk or walk, they only spend their days striking their heads against their bed bars. This institute is a real factory of future mentally disabled persons. Those children will never be able to attend school and will have serious language problems. They are not sick: they suffer great deprivation and never receive any stimulus'.

In order to make the most of their mission, MDM tries to train the Romanians to make them feel more responsible. Local doctors have an absolute mania for prescribing injections. Under the extremely bad hygiene conditions this practice is a great danger. Because of this, it is impossible to stop AIDS and hepatitis B process of contamination. According to many doctors the AIDS rate is very high but to disclose it could cause panic.

The MDM mission dealing with the county of Hunedoara is financed by the EEC. They work in collaboration with the county prefecture and with some representatives of the Romanian Ministry of Health. The Romanian government has opened its country to international humanitarian agencies. The Government has put its Civil Service at the agencies' disposal and it really tries, according to its means, to support their actions: some cars are put at their disposal. Thankfully through this dynamic co-operation, the number of 'orphans' has decreased by thirty per cent.

Now, MDM and the Romanian authorities are turning to the future. First, they are planning to found a new social service to support all families who want their children back home. They will help to provide for their education and to bring the children back into the world. Efficient psychiatric services will be set up for these children. These plans will be submitted to an EEC Commission in order to obtain finance.

Today, as the Romanian economy is a wreck, the Government cannot face its problems alone. Romania and its battered children cry out for help from the world — as they did at Christmas two years ago.

FIVE DAYS IN A NATIONAL HEALTH HOSPITAL

by Eric Glasgow

DRINKING my coffee in a local cafe in the heat of the day, the world turned suddenly black. In what seemed to be a few moments, an ambulance arrived, and two confident and kindly men carried me, prostrate, into it. I can remember only dimly the short journey to the Southport and Formby District Hospital, a massive new building, teeming with life and activity, opened only three years ago. Suddenly, I was surrounded by a concourse of varied professionals, pumping various drugs into both of my arms. I opened my eyes, looking into the expectant face of a young doctor, probably from India. I had expected a few hours in a rest room, perhaps with a cup of tea. Instead, I spent five whole days and nights, mostly in intensive care: one never can tell with the elderly and the agitated.

It was quite a new experience for me, never having been an in-patient in a hospital before; and as my first protracted encounter with the current facilities of the National Health Service — rather a political football, for the moment — it may perhaps warrant these brief observations. At any rate, having little else to do during those long hours of light and darkness, those five days of mingled relief and expectation, my mind allowed itself to wander over what I might make of the untoward experience, constructively and in literary terms. It was to be, for me, observation of the unaccustomed life that I saw around me, recollected in the tranquillity of recovery: thankful and resilient.

I am never much at ease when away from home, and my customary things; least of all in the pressing environment of a large and busy hospital. Even in intensive care, I watched the nurses for most of the first day, gradually recognizing their various uniforms: blue for the Ward Sisters, blue and white for the Staff Nurses, other array for Auxiliaries and trainees. Their calm efficiency impressed me: aloof from personal affiliations, yet also sympathetic and helpful. To my surprise, meals came round with regularity, and their quality was adequate. The doctors made their rounds. If I have to make a complaint, it is against discussion of cases in the open ward, since I believe that I overheard several cases besides my own, thus perhaps becoming over-anxious about my own condition.

The first night came: darkness everywhere, apart from the spot of light where the night staff sat at their duties. It was a long stint for them: 9.30 pm until 7 am without a break. Fortunately, while I was there, no emergency occurred, so the chief problem was boredom, but they had to be ready for anything. Another day broke: bright and sunny. Different staff came on duty, quietly and methodically. It was good to be alive, and in no particular pain. A young nurse in training took my blood pressure and my temperature: already quietly efficient and professional. Tea and toast arrived, so I was not to be starved.

So day and night followed each other, without interruption. I was

lucky: there was no great crisis in the hospital while I was there. A nurse from Nigeria, attended to me, telling me that she was just three months in England, and she hoped to return to Nigeria once her nursing qualifications had been acquired. An assortment of doctors perambulated the ward: from India, Holland, France, and Scotland. They must sometimes have wearied of patients' 'conditions'. I hoped that as much as possible they did meet healthy people. In here, or so it seemed, everybody was sick, and that is in itself a wholly abnormal situation. I tried to learn as much as I could about my fellow-sufferers: to defeat, if I could, the annoying waste of time. One young man had blood poisoning, contracted by being bitten by some horrendous insect while picking strawberries. His right arm was severely swollen, and he was in considerable discomfort. In the next bed was the victim of a heart-attack, brought on by excessive swimming. He protested that he wanted to smoke. I support the ban on smoking in hospitals, and I was rather surprised to find that this hospital did allow smoking in a few secluded areas (but not in the toilets). Old age was perhaps the biggest single cause of illness in this ward; and there is no final cure for that. The lines of Laurence Binyon came into my head: 'Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn'. Boredom, however, threatened to be the biggest drain on one's mental resources. I was surprised how little men read. One man in the far corner read a solid book about Louis XIV and the Palace of Versailles — glamorous enough for such austere surroundings — and I read a lively narrative about the ill-fated Czar Nicholas II of Russia: appropriate for the current changes in Russia.

For the most part, however, I was glad to be away for a time from the things of the world: politics and such like. I never opened a single newspaper while I was in the hospital. A kindly man each morning came round to shave us, if we wished. As he carved off my whiskers, I told him that I had changed several barbers recently, becoming mutually bored with each other's conversation, and that a barber's job was one of trust: think what could be done with an open razor upon an unsuspecting victim.

In the intense boredom of the daylight hours, I thought of George Meredith: 'And if I think oblivion of a day, so shorten I the stature of my soul'. I am fairly content: obviously, I will soon recover, and be on my way. Then I think of Solon: 'Call no man happy till he dies; he is at best but fortunate'. Love of some sort is essential and paramount in such houses of healing. We all lay there, all sorts and conditions of men, drawn from a diversity of setting and jobs. W. B. Yeats came fleetingly to me: 'One man loved the pilgrim soul in you, and loved the sorrows of your changing face'.

But it was particularly in the silence of each night that thoughts came of deeper and more lasting things. I could rarely sleep in such strange surroundings. Alfred de Vigny helped to populate my thoughts: 'Silence alone is great; all else is feebleness. Perfect with all your heart your long and heavy task . . . Then as do I, say naught but suffer and die'. Gloomy

in its end, although for the most part I saw hope everywhere in this short and uncalled for sojourn in a National Health Hospital. Darkness in itself did not trouble me, for I saw beyond it, in an oasis of animated light, the two shadowy figures of the night nurses on duty: dedicated, trustworthy, fit for anything. It was the poetry rather than the prose of life that kept me going in this situation. Like Shelley, during the long watches of the night, I experienced 'the desire of the moth for the candle, of the night for the morrow'.

Then, at last, after five long and somewhat feverish days, I could be away: not quite recovered, but clutching my little bag of drugs from the pharmacy, to be taken regularly each morning. It was a chore, but a necessary and an improving one. I was glad to be at work again, particularly behind a typewriter. Alas, however, I had become disillusioned: having witnessed at such close proximity the hard and often unpleasant work, so cheerfully carried out, by both nurses and doctors, in this specific sector of the National Health Service, my own pursuits and pre-occupations — with history, literature, and art — suddenly seemed to be too decorative, hedonistic, and irrelevant. I had lived too much among things of beauty and happiness, and I had not sufficiently understood the ugliness, the pain, the suffering, of life in its realities. Even in a hospital setting, beauty is always at hand, and so it ought to be. Joy is mingled with sorrow; hope with despair. 'Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, stains the white radiance of Eternity'. But we come closest to the Eternity, when — like Mother Teresa of Calcutta — we encounter and we take on board what is sordid and sorrowful in life, as well as what is bright, shining, and aspirant.

As now I write, the National Health Service is very much in the news, and it is perhaps better to concentrate on matters of agreement about it, rather than on matters of political difference. I suppose that we are all agreed that it does a magnificent job. Those who work in it are dedicated professionals, who deserve, at all levels, not only praise and support but greater financial rewards. We differ chiefly about how to generate the better funding, that will produce even better patient care. What rather surprises me is the widespread suspicion of many workers in the NHS — doctors as well as nurses — about the hopes and the intention of the present Conservative Government. The history of the NHS becomes peculiarly interesting, in that respect. It is a mistake to regard the NHS as wholly a Socialist creation. It was set up in 1948, largely on the basis of all-party consensus. The British Medical Association seems to have forgotten its entrenched opposition to the scheme between 1944 and 1948. As one recent researcher has put it, 'the BMA tried frantically to discredit the scheme, finding sinister implications of bureaucratic control lurking everywhere under the idealistic promises of the White Paper. The BMA kept up an unedifying racket until the very eve of the new service's creation'.

Of course, it was an ambitious and formidable task: 'a free and comprehensive health service available to all without reference to means'.

Once in operation in 1948, it became the pivot of the British Welfare State, and the first of its sort in the world, apart from New Zealand. It has since gained a world-wide reputation for excellence and professionalism. There is no evidence that it has damaged at all the traditional doctor-patient relationship, and it is evident that advances in medicine of all sorts would have been impossible without the NHS. The NHS has produced enormous improvements in the health of the nation. Infant mortality, for example, fell by half between 1946 and 1956. Specialist medical care became available for many otherwise denied it by lack of money.

The basic problems of the NHS seem to me to be essentially non-political, and it is lamentable if ever they were to be used by any political party in order to gain power, or to hold on to power. There is far more agreement about the future needs of the NHS than there can or there ought to be disagreement about them. It is not only an argument about money. What also matters is the more efficient use of money, and there the efforts to bring business methods into hospital administration are, in themselves, acceptable. Avoid waste, improve efficiency, and there will be more money available for patient care; and there ought to be no ideological dogmas impeding that necessary and salutary process. Clearly, large sums could be saved, out of enormous budgets, by better management, even privatization, of such ancillary services as washing, cleaning, portering, security, and the like. That would not alter the focus upon the central theme of medical help for the patients.

The NHS today is chronically short of funding. About that there is no disagreement, and it is unfortunate if any political party should seek to extract electoral advantage out of any exploitation of that need. It has not arisen out of political policy of any sort. It has arisen out of the enormous growth in the costs of medical help owing to technical improvements and developments, the greater availability of drugs, and people simply living longer. It seems to me perfectly acceptable that hospitals should be expected to buy their drugs on the cheapest market, reducing the often exorbitant profits of the drug companies (subject, of course, to adequate 'quality controls').

There is nothing new about the financial problems of the NHS, nor did these begin with the Conservative regime in 1979. From the outset, the NHS cost far more than had been expected. The original White Paper of 1944 had estimated the annual costs at £347,000,000, of which some £305,000,000 would be borne by the Exchequer. In fact, even in the first year, the NHS cost over £400 million and by 1959, the total was £726 million and still rising. By 1959, about four million people annually passed through NHS hospitals, almost double that of 1949.

Spiralling costs made the NHS an increasing burden on the national wealth, although it was one which the majority of citizens were content to bear so that the excellence of the NHS could be preserved and expanded. But it is now a long time since the NHS began in 1948, and changes in its funding and its structure, therefore, have become inevitable, to meet changing needs and social conditions. Elements of 'privatization' in its

operations are progressive rather than retrograde, and merely strengthen rather than diminish the original idea (always deficient when it came to its funding). I can see no reason to believe, therefore, that the NHS will not be at least as safe in the hands of any future Conservative Government, as it might be in the hands of any future Labour Government; and my recent, happily brief sojourn of five days in a NHS hospital has confirmed my belief in the efficiency of its management, the dedication, care, and skill of both doctors and nurses, and finally, the need for such a comprehensive health service for the good of the whole community.

HOME

The key is turned against the night,
the windows closed, the curtains drawn;
clean linen vests the new-made bed
where Truth and Love will lie till dawn.

Peace gathers round the shaded lamp,
calm Care keeps hearth and table well.
Four walls appoint the proper place;
where hands joined Man found room to dwell.

Paul Mackintosh

BRITAIN'S INVISIBLE EXPORTS

by David Lammie

THE notion that Britain is a manufacturing economy should have died many years ago. Traditional heavy industry was showing signs of decline by the late 19th century, whilst newer assembly businesses have been feeling the full force of overseas competition for the past twenty years. Today, less than one in four of the workforce is employed in manufacturing. However, such is the legacy of Britain's pioneering role in the Industrial Revolution, that one of the few economic success stories of recent years has been obscured by a mixture of nostalgia and half-baked economic logic.

The rise of 'the invisibles' sector has helped to fill the void created by manufacturing decline, both in terms of employment and foreign currency earnings. Although the term has been in use for over a century, it is often misunderstood. Invisibles are more than just well-known services, such as banking and insurance; they also comprise such activities as tourist spending in Britain, use of British aircraft and ships, consultancy services and the returns from overseas investment. It has become big business, accounting for over a quarter of all world trade. In many Western countries, such as France, Britain and the USA, invisibles are an integral element of a mature, mixed economy. In years to come they will be the focus for German and Japanese, as rising labour costs force them to diversify. Already it is interesting to observe the way in which Japanese firms are expanding into financial services and computer software in much the same way as they started up in motorcycle manufacture in the post-war period.

Despite compelling evidence of the huge importance of invisibles in the UK, sceptical voices can still be heard. Some go as far as to argue that manufacturing and primary industries are the sole creators of wealth. This is simply nonsense. Nor is it helpful to decry the quality of tourist-related jobs, for example, when so many families are wholly dependent on such income. In some regions, such as Cornwall which has had to cope with a slump in tin mining and fishing, it is now one of the few sources of employment. More valid criticism is levelled at invisible statistics, which are prone to high degrees of error and are open to different interpretations. The latest set of figures, published for the first time by the promotional body, British Invisibles, sparked off accusations that it was exaggerating the earnings from financial institutions and overseas investment. The debate is certain to continue.

Putting these arguments to one side for the moment, it is worth highlighting a few points which are not the subject of dispute: UK invisibles earned a total surplus in 1990 of over £11 billion, generate more than half of the country's foreign earnings and form twice as great a percentage of GNP as any other G7 country. In short, it has assumed a degree of importance to the nation which would seem to make it impossible to

ignore. Yet a quick scan through the daily papers or the television news following the release of the monthly trade figures, might lead you to a different conclusion. At best all they get is a concluding paragraph or a passing comment. There are three main reasons for this neglect, apart from the lingering prejudice against invisibles.

The media can be partly forgiven, in the sense that they are dealing with such an intangible subject. Pictures of cars being unloaded onto the docks at Dover make for better television than some attempt at portraying the Eurocurrency market. Newspapers are more inclined to show oil barrels stacked on top of one another in graphical form than charts detailing the interest earned on overseas investment: no more important, they would admit, but much easier to portray. Invisibles certainly live up to their name by being an elusive visual form, but this is far from being sufficient reason for the lack of media coverage.

Consistency of performance may be another factor. Two hundred years of surplus is only likely to awaken the interests of the press if this slumber of unbroken success were ever to become threatened. In the meantime, the more volatile fortunes of merchandise trade makes for livelier copy. The thorniest problem of all, though, is statistical. On the surface, balance of payment figures would appear to be everything that an economist could want: up to date, precise and detailed down to the last nut and bolt. The trouble is that they tell only half the story. Data for visible trade is, indeed, accurate. That which can be seen, touched and weighed as it passes through our docks and ports is recorded and later published to a degree which all but the keenest civil servant might regard as pedantic.

For invisibles, the calculator is replaced by the crystal ball. It is not hard to see why. Quantifying how much an American tourist spends while visiting London's shops, shows and restaurants, is far from being an exact science. Gauging the precise amounts involved in international banking flows is no less tricky. Statisticians invariably have to rely on surveys and industry estimates, which are frequently out of date and subject to high margins of error. The result is predictable: monthly figures are rounded to the nearest £100m and often later revised beyond recognition. Quarterly figures are a little more reliable but are far from being watertight. For an accurate picture you have to wait until the annual figures are published the following September. Hardly hot news by the time they come round, and even then more attention is focused on past errors of calculation and missing millions.

Given the inherent and universal problem of collecting invisibles data, computation is always going to involve its fair share of guesswork. To this extent, no one body is at fault, but all governments could do much more to improve matters. The fact that services were excluded from GATT until the current round of talks began in 1986 gives an indication of a worldwide lack of recognition.

To its credit, the Conservative Government has at last acknowledged the problem and in May 1990 began an initiative aimed at improving the output of the Central Statistical Office. The move was prompted by a

massive, not to say embarrassing, discrepancy of £15 billion between the inflows and outflows of our international accounts. A 'balancing item' of such magnitude makes it impossible to analyse just how well the UK was performing in the international arena. Whilst some progress has, therefore, already been achieved, much remains to be done. One simple improvement would be to distinguish between private and public sector invisibles. The CSO's continued failure to do so on a monthly basis means that earnings from the private sector are lumped together with such items as EC contributions and the cost of keeping the British Army in Germany.

Any meaningful analysis of the monthly statistics is rendered almost impossible by this crude categorisation. It is all the more curious as the public sector figure is invariably in the red, despite the occasional windfall such as the recent £1.1 billion contribution to Britain's Gulf War costs. As such it seriously underplays the performance of the private sector. This is not a policy one would normally associate with an incumbent government, given its usual tendency to gloat over any crumb of economic good news.

Against this rather unsatisfactory background, a number of positive things can be stated with certainty. The first point to make clear is that rather than in any way competing with other sectors, services are entirely complementary. Goods need to be transported, legally protected, insured and financially backed, just as much as they need machines and a labour-force to be made. London's rise as a trading and financial centre in the nineteenth century did not occur in isolation. It simply reflected the country's overall prosperity. Frankfurt and Tokyo now perform a similar role: namely massive and vibrant economies needing the support of large and diverse financial markets.

That the City can still rank with New York and Tokyo and overshadow the likes of Paris and Frankfurt, says much for its stamina and ingenuity. Despite disguising what is now a second-rate economy, London has managed to sustain the scale and breadth of its activities by actively encouraging international business through a liberal and progressive approach. In a variety of fields, the City can still make some impressive boasts. The largest number of foreign banks, 526 at the last count, including more American banks than New York. The highest foreign exchange volume, $187 billion a day in 1989, and growing. International equity turnover four times higher than either Tokyo or New York, and streets ahead of the European competition. The world's largest insurance and ship-broking industries... The list can and does go on.

Complacency is not in order, however, especially if the City is to benefit from the changing world environment. Emerging economies in the Far East and market and political reform in Eastern Europe are major opportunities, but the City's chances of taking full advantage will not have been helped by recent damaging developments. The BCCI affair and the losses incurred at Lloyd's of London could have a lasting effect on the City's all-important reputation. This comes at a time when international banking and securities trading have still to recover fully from

the October 1987 Crash, while Continental centres are trying desperately to win market share.

The prize in the era of the Single European Market will be a great one, and the City cannot afford many more slip-ups over the coming years. It will also need to operate within an adequately regulated EC framework, and in this regard political recognition and lobbying will be crucial. For its part, the Tory party has always had strong links with the Square Mile, a connection which is reinforced by the emergence of that ex-banker, John Major. More surprising has been the sight of senior Labour Party ministers courting financial institutions in recent times. Whilst some mutual suspicion will no doubt remain, an open dialogue with both main parties is an encouraging development for Britain's largest invisible earner.

Just as the City clearly faces a challenge, so do Britain's other major invisible earners. Civil aviation and tourism both have some way to go before recouping lost revenues resulting from the Gulf War. Longer term, passenger volumes should revert to pre-Gulf War levels and continue the upward trends of the past twenty years. The picture is much less rosy for shipping, which continues to face pressures from other modes of transport. Reflecting the stagnation in the industry, UK overseas shipping earnings of £3.8 billion in 1989 were no improvement on the figure of a decade earlier.

To end on a more upbeat note, it is worth considering the contributions of two lesser known invisible earners, the professions and the Arts. It is well recognised that surveying, television programmes, West End theatre and the fine arts can be exported just as easily as washing machines. What is not commonly known is that it is being done on such a massive scale: a record £1.5 billion surplus for the various professions in 1990 and over £6 billion gross in 1989 for Arts-related businesses. Now that really does merit more than a passing mention or concluding paragraph. It is only now that we are beginning to uncover the full range and contribution of Britain's invisible exporters. Until recently few would have believed that the Arts could be generating earnings on a par with North Sea oil and gas. The potential for even further growth in such a dynamic sector clearly exists.

With the EC deadline of a single market fast approaching and the possibility of a successful completion of the GATT talks, invisible trade could be given a significant boost. A legally binding set of rules between different nations and covering all service trading activities would certainly be a landmark. Such an agreement would encourage greater investment abroad and build upon the range of services and new products offered. Who knows, it may even bring home the realisation that a modern services sector can be integral to economic growth and development.

[David Lammie is a journalist, and was previously Press Officer at British Invisibles.]

BOTSWANA'S SILVER JUBILEE: A QUARTER CENTURY OF DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

by John A. Wiseman

WHEN the Bechuanaland Protectorate became the independent Republic of Botswana on 30th September 1966 it seemed to most observers to be amongst the least likely candidates for successful post-colonial development. The existence of the new state appeared to represent merely the tail-end of the British decolonisation process rather than a reflection of the viability of independent statehood for the territory. Twenty-five years on, the situation has been transformed beyond recognition. While the performance of so many post-colonial states in Africa has varied from disappointing to catastrophic that of Botswana has been a resounding success.

For most of the colonial period from the founding of the protectorate in 1885 the separate existence of the territory hung in the balance as the South African government demanded its incorporation. It was not until 1963 that this danger was removed; even then, the administrative capital remained over the border in Makeking, finally moving to Gaborone just before independence. The British decision to found the protectorate, which followed a vigorous campaign by the Tswana chiefs to demand this move, was based largely on perceived strategic interests. With the extension of Boer settlement in the Transvaal and the German occupation of South West Africa (now Namibia) the British became anxious to secure the route from the Cape to Rhodesia. Having secured this with the establishment of the protectorate, the British showed little interest in trying to develop the territory which remained amongst the most neglected in the Empire.

With a land area the size of France consisting mainly of the Kalahari desert and with, apparently, virtually nothing in the way of natural resources, day to day administration in Bechuanaland was left largely in the hands of the traditional tribal chiefs operating under the notional control of a miniscule colonial bureaucracy. Some of the chiefs and some of the more progressive colonial officials made attempts to achieve economic development but by independence the country was amongst the poorest and least developed in the world. The economy was based on the sending of migrant labour to South Africa and on the rearing of cattle, an enterprise which was vulnerable to periodic drought. In 1966 the country had less than ten miles of tarred road, there were school places for only a handful of children and the administrative structures of a modern state hardly existed. To compound the problems, Botswana was geographically surrounded by the white minority ruled states of South Africa, Rhodesia and South West Africa which had a less than sympathetic attitude to the non-racial, but black majority, government of the new state.

Thus, the combination of problems facing the newly independent state of Botswana in 1966 was such that it would be difficult to imagine a less

promising beginning. To predict any significant level of positive change would have appeared wildly optimistic. The fact that a quarter of a century later Botswana is a continental leader in terms of prosperity, development, democracy and stability is all the more remarkable when viewed in the context of its unfavourable embarkation point.

Successes in the political and economic spheres have been mutually reinforcing. Without doubt the continued existence of a stable and democratic political system has enormously aided economic development. Conversely, rapid economic growth and development has helped to sustain the positive features of the political system. Since independence Botswana has continuously operated a multi-party, liberal-democratic system with freedom for opposition parties and regular, free and fair elections. There have been five elections since independence: in 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984 and 1989. In all of these the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has emerged victorious with between two-thirds and three-quarters of the popular vote. The opposition parties, of which the Botswana National Front (BNF) has emerged as the most important, have maintained a steady minority representation in parliament. At the local government level the BNF have done even better and since 1984 have controlled all the town councils in the country including the capital, Gaborone. In twenty-five years Botswana has never had a political prisoner. It has been argued that this adherence to democracy is strongly related to traditional Tswana political culture which emphasised wide participation in decision-making and open political debate.

It is also the case that Botswana has benefited from political leadership of an extremely high calibre. The founding father of modern Botswana and leader until his death in 1980 was Seretse Khama who combined high traditional status as the rightful heir to the chieftaincy of the largest tribe with a modern education and great personal qualities. Ironically the fact that the British authorities, under pressure from the South African government, banned him from becoming chief following his marriage to a white woman in 1948 actually helped him to emerge as a national leader rather than just the leader of the Bamangwato tribe. Combining great integrity, intelligence and political skill with personal modesty and an unqualified commitment to democracy he established a system which was able to survive his passing. He was succeeded by his close friend and colleague Quett Masire who remains President to this day. Although Masire lacks Khama's traditional status he has operated very much along the lines established by the latter. Eschewing the flamboyant but ultimately empty rhetoric favoured by some African leaders, both men concentrated on dealing with the concrete problems the country faced in a realistic and pragmatic fashion.

Aside from domestic success both men became international statesmen of considerable significance as they adroitly negotiated the minefield of diplomatic relations in the troubled southern African region. Constantly having to balance declared abhorrence of apartheid with significant economic dependence on South Africa called for particular skill. Unable to

compete with South Africa in terms of military might, Botswana chose to make its point by example by establishing and sustaining a non-racial society in which the white minority in the population play a full role in public life. White Batswana continue to be elected to parliament, by a predominantly black electorate, and have served in key positions within the government and the bureaucracy. Botswana has clearly demonstrated that racial harmony is entirely possible even in southern Africa: it remains to be seen if others can learn that lesson.

Another major achievement has been the creation since independence of a state structure which is strong but not authoritarian. The institutional framework of a modern bureaucracy which is relatively efficient and almost entirely free from the cancer of corruption has been built almost from scratch. Although Botswana has avoided the perils of an excessively statist approach to development, the administration has played a very positive role in co-ordinating and shaping development strategies. In many African states national development plans represent pious hopes or ideological rhetoric but in Botswana they represent coherent sets of objectives which are then actually achieved. The Botswana state is one that gets things done.

If Botswana's post-independence record in the political and administrative spheres has been impressive then its record in the economic sphere can only be described as spectacular. It has established the fastest growing economy in the world, admittedly starting from an incredibly low base. From being one of the poorest countries in the world it has moved to middle-income status in the world table. Real GDP per capita is eight times what it was at independence in spite of a doubling of the population. Real percentage growth has been in double figures in almost every year since 1966.

Of overwhelming importance in accounting for this phenomenal record of growth has been the discovery and exploitation of mineral deposits which have taken place entirely in the post-independence period. Earlier perceptions of a country totally lacking resources were based entirely on ignorance. To date, diamonds have been the most important. The search for diamonds began in 1955 but initially nothing of significance was discovered. The breakthrough came in 1967 with the discovery of a massive diamond pipe deep in the Kalahari near the remote cattle post of Orapa. Since then diamond mining at Orapa, Jwaneng and Letlhakane has turned Botswana into the third largest producer by volume in the world and the largest by value due to the high quality of its diamonds. Today diamonds account for over three-quarters of total exports and nearly half of GDP. Also of importance have been the mining of copper/nickel at Selebi-Phikwe and coal at Morupule. Just this year, large scale production of soda ash began at Sua Pan thereby adding a new dimension to Botswana's mineral exploitation. Certainly Botswana has enjoyed good fortune with its minerals but it is important to stress that wise government policy and management have also contributed to successful exploitation of natural resources. There are a number of African countries which have enormous mineral potential yet mismanagement and corruption have blocked eco-

nomic development.

Agriculture, especially cattle-rearing, remains an important employer of labour but the arid climate, exacerbated by periodic drought, reduces its prosperity. However the quality of Botswana's beef exports is sufficient to satisfy the stringent requirements of the EEC. More important in the generation of new wealth has been a huge growth in the manufacturing sector. At independence, manufacturing, outside of beef processing, was virtually non-existent. When I first visited Botswana in the early 1970s there was excited discussion about the possibility of a bicycle assembly plant! Now Gaborone has extensive industrial areas producing not just basic products like processed foodstuffs and textiles but also sophisticated industrial goods, medicines, vaccines and chemicals. These developments have created many much needed jobs for the growing population. The manufacturing sector in Botswana is expanding faster than anywhere in the world outside of east Asia.

Economic growth has been supported by a massive growth in the infrastructure of the country. At independence almost all roads were dirt and of poor quality: now high quality tarred roads link not only the urban centres but all the larger villages. The provision of services like water, electricity and telecommunications have reached a quality and extent normally only found in developed countries. At independence, few children went to school and there were only a handful of Batswana undergraduates, all in universities abroad. Today more than 90% of children are in school and Botswana has its own excellent university with around three thousand students. The provision of health facilities has also expanded enormously and, having had the misfortune to break my arm on my recent visit, I can personally testify to the quality of treatment provided free by the Botswana Health Service.

One final telling example of the success of Botswana has been its ability to cope with natural disaster. In other African states drought has led to horrendous consequences for the population and urgent calls for international aid. When Botswana experienced several years of drought in the mid-1980s it coped entirely through self-help and nobody starved.

With so many post-colonial African states lurching from one political or economic crisis to the next it is pleasant to report on one which has been such a resounding success. If Botswana does as well in the next twenty-five years as it has in the last twenty-five it will be doing very well indeed.

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SON OF THE SOIL

by Raymond Tong

I was pleased when the time came for me to leave Nigeria in 1957. Looking back on it a good deal of the nine years that I spent there had been quite pleasant. From a material point of view my life in Nigeria was not particularly attractive. The modest salary could scarcely be said to compensate for the malaria and the dysentery that I intermittently experienced. Nor could the various uncomfortable government bungalows that I occupied ever be remotely associated with the lifestyle of that privileged fictional character, the 'imperial lackey'. I was nevertheless generally contented and nearly always very enthusiastic about the work I was doing. Indeed, it would be true to say that I was a prime example of what the Yoruba dramatist Wole Soyinka has quite rightly described as 'a comic white man'.

Like a great many others of that naive and well-meaning breed, having survived the War, I was entirely prepared to devote my life to the seemingly worthwhile task of assisting the people of Nigeria to achieve not only what we saw as a better way of life, but also full national independence. The fact that they were of a completely different race and culture, that their definitions were not necessarily the same as our definitions, never seemed to worry us. We were scarcely ever aware of the fact that they often regarded us with suspicion or that they found it difficult to believe that we were actually doing what we were doing. Of course, having regard to their own approach to reality, one could hardly blame them for often refusing to accept that we were consciously and willingly working ourselves out of our own posts. How could they possibly believe that, having patiently created the country called Nigeria out of a vast multiplicity of tribal areas, the British were preparing to hand over unconditionally all that had been built up by so much sacrifice over so many decades? Certainly, whenever they were sufficiently percipient to accept us for the easy-going, dimly idealistic people that we really were, there is little wonder that most Nigerians found us to be rather unreal and most decidedly comical.

In retrospect, from my own point of view, there can be no doubt that I was looking at the world, and particularly Africa, through rose-coloured spectacles. Not that there was anything wrong in that. I was after all still comparatively young and colonial evolution to self-government still seemed a worthwhile cause. Like a good many people of my generation, having spent a fairly long period overseas during the War, I had acquired a liking for expatriate living, especially in warm climates. In particular the continent of Africa had a boundless fascination for me. Moreover I enjoyed the feeling of challenge, the restlessness, which working in Africa at that time invariably involved. And since it had not yet seriously occurred to me that I would be forever on the outside looking in, I was still innocently absorbed in African affairs, especially my own professional area of African education.

Yet even so, for me, as perhaps for the majority of Europeans who worked in West Africa, the most pleasant time of all was that exhilarating moment, that supreme moment of freedom, which came at the end of every tour. It was the moment when, after eighteen months of toil and sweat, one stood on the deck of a homeward bound ship, watching the coast slip gently away. One knew that for four or five months all the problems and palavers had been left behind. Ahead lay a restful voyage, followed by reunion with family and friends, with the lights of the city or the quiet of the countryside, with all the things one valued most in one's own land. It was quite normal at this stage to make up one's mind not to come back for another tour, but such is the perversity of human nature that one usually did.

I well remember one such moment. I was standing on the sun deck of the *Apapa* watching the breakwater outside Lagos harbour getting farther and farther away in the late afternoon sunshine. It had been a particularly busy tour, and in many ways an exasperating one. For over a year we had been working very hard on an accelerated programme of teacher training, and being as always understaffed and under pressure, political and otherwise, I was quite pleased when the time had come for me to go on leave. As the breakwater gradually became a small dot on the horizon, then finally disappeared, I gave a hearty sigh of relief.

Possibly my relief was a little too obvious, for happening to glance round I saw an African sitting in a deck-chair nearby, watching me intently and smiling in a slightly cynical sort of way. He was a tall, well-built man of about thirty. What was perhaps most noticeable about him was that, unlike most of the other Africans who had just embarked, he was not formally overdressed in a lounge suit, but was sensibly clad in light-weight trousers, a sports shirt and sandals.

As he was obviously aware that I realised he had been observing me, I decided to smile as well. 'I was just thinking how pleasant it is to have got another tour over and to be going back home on leave', I said, sitting down in a deck-chair not far from him.

'It must be very nice', he agreed, in very good English. 'At least for a European. As far as I'm concerned the ship's going in the wrong direction. For me Nigeria is home. I'm never happy away from it. I'm an African. I'm a son of the soil. It's different for you Europeans. You come and go. Nigeria never really means anything to you.'

There was a tense note in his voice, an element of reproach. I realised that under his smiling exterior he was probably feeling sharply the pangs of departure. I began to think that perhaps it would have been better if I had not spoken to him. The last thing I wanted, at such a moment, was a nationalistic lecture on the relative positions of Africans and Europeans in Africa. For eighteen months I had been listening to such things and at the end of another four and a half months I was due for a further instalment. All I wanted now was peace: no educational targets, no development plans, no political harangues, and certainly no more double-talk.

I therefore said nothing and we sat in silence for a minute or two.

'Are you stationed in Lagos?' he suddenly asked, evidently determined to forget the direction in which the ship was going.

'No, I'm in Ibadan.'

'I know Ibadan well. Somehow I thought your face looked familiar. Do you work for Government?'

'Yes, I'm in the Education Department. I work in the Western Region Ministry of Education. I spent my first three years though working up-country in a government college.'

When I told him the name of the government college he smiled broadly. 'You must have known my youngest brother. He's gone onto university now though.'

He then told me his name. It is not at all a well known name, but for convenience I will henceforth refer to him as Olatunde, a Yoruba first name. I remembered his brother quite well: a tall, cheerful boy; intelligent, but rather easy-going. During my last term at the college he had committed an indiscretion with one of the local girls, which in a less enlightened institution would certainly have meant his being expelled.

Besides having taught his brother, I soon found that Olatunde was very well informed about people and events in Ibadan and knew quite a few of the people I knew. So that in spite of my not feeling particularly talkative, it was not long before we were deep in conversation. Perhaps sharing my desire to relax, he never once reverted to the slightest political undertone. We went on chatting for over an hour, only stopping at the sound of the dinner gong.

Olatunde was on his way to England with a scholarship to undertake two years' research. During the course of the voyage I came to know him quite well and developed a fairly good idea of what made him tick. He had pleasant, easy manners and a ready sense of humour, which was often accompanied by a memorable laugh that seemed to come bubbling up from deep within him. Like myself, he spent nearly every morning around the swimming pool and nearly every evening on the deck within easy reach of the bar. The more we got into conversation, the more interests we found we had in common. We talked a good deal, through the long lazy days and often late into the night. And, of course, we inevitably talked about African education, nationalism, and all the other things from which I had intended to take a complete holiday. Although he reminded me at fairly regular intervals that he was half a lawyer and half a politician, and that unlike me he was a true son of the sacred Nigerian soil, usually he was very good company. Only on one occasion did I become painfully aware that besides his springs of laughter he also contained unfathomed hidden depths of anger and resentment. And then, so intense was his bitterness, in which I was obviously included, that had I not received a long training in such matters, I should doubtless have been considerably annoyed.

It occurred after we had spent the day ashore in Freetown. We had arrived back on the ship in apparently very good spirits after an enjoyable afternoon at Lumley Beach. As we sat having tea and watching the tugs

arriving to escort us out of the harbour, he began telling me a little more about his early life. He had told me a good deal already, and it was clear that things had not always been too easy for him. His father had worked intermittently as a labourer in a timber-yard in one of the ports on the Niger Delta and all his family were desperately poor. Olatunde's brightest boyhood memories were of the days he had spent on the rafts which were floated down to the port from the dense forests further upstream.

He owed his start in life to a Catholic missionary, in whose house he had worked as a small boy. The missionary had sent him to a primary school, and realising that he had real ability had later helped him to get into a secondary school. From then onwards the world began to open up to him and he began to dream of what he might become. After he had completed his secondary education he had worked for a time as a teacher, but continued to study hard in his spare time. Eventually, with the advice and aid of a local education officer, he managed to obtain a scholarship to an English university to study law. Once in England new possibilities were revealed to him. While continuing to study hard for his degree, he became an enthusiastic member of a group of nationalist African students determined to obtain independence for their countries in the quickest possible time. As his confidence increased, he began to make speeches and to write articles on the subject of Nigerian self-government. After four years he had returned to Nigeria with a fairly good degree and with a burning nationalist zeal.

Such a state of affairs was not only very natural, but entirely in accord with the policy and beliefs of the people in England who had received him, as well as of the colonial government that had sent him. It should never be forgotten that, unlike all previous empires, Britain added a completely new dimension to imperialism with the concept of evolution to nationhood and democratic self-government. Since the Durham Report in 1839, the first step in the evolution of Canadian independence, the process of constitutional development towards self-government has gradually taken place throughout that quarter of the globe which was once the British Empire. As regards Nigeria, it had become fairly evident by about 1950, to the majority of people most closely involved, that the pace of evolution was accelerating and that independence could not be far distant. Administrative, economic and educational planning increasingly had this eventuality in view. And as I knew from personal experience in a government college, the history syllabus for Nigerian secondary schools had long emphasised the concept of evolution to self-government. Of course, what the history syllabus had not mentioned were all the social and regional tensions, all the inner conflicts and personal tragedies, involved in spanning the vast gulf between a tribal village and the United Nations. Nor did it give any indication of the inevitable impatience and the bitter rancour of many young and ambitious African nationalists.

Olatunde was revealing something of this bitterness as the tugs left us and the *Apapa* headed for the high seas. In particular, he was becoming increasingly furious about the British people.

'But surely,' I said, 'if you feel like that, why are you going back for a second time?'

This made him even more angry. 'Because the research will be very useful to me. Besides, you've got to know the weaknesses of the enemy.'

'The enemy! Surely you don't believe your own propaganda?' I tried to smile. 'How can you say the British are the enemy? Don't forget how the country we now call Nigeria came into being in the first place! You talk a lot about your fight for freedom. Yet you know quite well that we're all working very hard to create a situation in which the government can be handed over with a minimum of difficulty. You don't have to fight for your independence, Ola. It's being handed to you on a golden plate!'

'How very British! How very smug and smooth! You and your damned democracy!' he growled. 'If you were a son of the soil, like I am, you'd find there are a couple of obvious questions. Who invited the British to come to Africa? Who asked them to be so kind as to administer and develop us? You take away our freedom, yet unlike the French and the other colonialists, you have never felt that it was worth while to try to assimilate us. With the aid of 'Old Mother Indirect Rule' you have even encouraged many Nigerians to feel that they are largely governing themselves through their own local governments. Now we are assured that we will eventually get complete national independence. Yet only when you decide that the time is right! You have turned our freedom struggle into a series of constitutional conferences. We won't even get the pleasure of kicking you out!'

'Would you prefer us to shoot at one another?' I asked. 'Surely the reason for constitutional conferences is to ensure that, as far as possible, Nigeria can move successfully towards independence in a peaceful manner. Hopefully with the possibility of a democratic future.'

'Everything is always so democratic!' He was perspiring profusely. 'Peaceful and democratic! Ah, the same old claptrap!'

It was indeed the same old claptrap. One could understand the reasons for it, and one could only feel sorry when it suddenly bedevilled otherwise rational relationships. It was not what had been said that mattered, but the ill-tempered, personal tone that had crept into the words. After all, he knew that I believed as firmly as he did that Nigeria should become independent at the earliest possible date.

I got up and leant against the rail. 'I don't feel much like talking politics,' I said. 'I think I'll go and have a shower. What about joining me in the bar in about an hour?'

He nodded agreement. 'O.K. Good idea.'

When I went into the bar an hour later Olatunde was waiting for me. He obviously regretted his previous mood and was clearly very apologetic. We never referred to the matter again and we remained good shipmates for the rest of the voyage. When we said good-bye in Liverpool, we arranged to meet in London the following week. Unfortunately, however, the meeting had to be cancelled owing to an unforeseen occurrence, so that I returned to Nigeria without seeing him.

I did meet him again, but only by accident, and not until twelve years later. In the meantime Nigeria had obtained regional self-government in 1957, followed by complete independence in 1960. As the result of a good deal of patience and forbearance, this evolution to self-government was achieved reasonably smoothly and peacefully. Moreover, although the pace of evolution had been fairly rapid, the prospects for a prosperous and democratic future seemed reasonably bright. Certainly, when independence finally became a reality, it was generally felt that the British in Nigeria still retained the friendly respect of a large percentage of the people they had formerly governed. The sort of frustration and bitterness expressed by Olatunde that afternoon on the *Apapa* was no longer much in evidence. The British had kept all their promises. They had helped the Nigerians overcome various administrative, economic and political obstacles. They had then unconditionally handed over the reins of government, as they had always said they would. In a memorable speech to the new Nigerian nation on the day that the country first celebrated its independence, the prime minister of the federation, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, paid a warm tribute to the vast achievements of the government officials, the missionaries, the businessmen and many others. Summing up the British people's long association with Nigerians, he said that they had been thought of 'first as masters, then as leaders, finally as partners — but always as friends.' The 'comic white man' could surely not have received a better testimonial.

By the time this speech was made, however, I had left Nigeria. After two and a half years inspecting secondary schools in Uganda I had then embarked on a new overseas career in the fascinating area of cultural and educational relations. Although by this time I had entirely accepted that, as far as Africa was concerned, I would for ever be on the outside looking in, I still remained very interested in African affairs. I continued to be a member of both the Royal African Society and the Royal Commonwealth Society, and whenever I returned home on leave invariably spent a few days at their premises in Northumberland Avenue.

On one occasion I went there to hear a lecture on Nigeria by a magazine editor, an acquaintance of mine. It proved to be a dry, factual lecture, and as I was sitting at the back I decided to leave somewhat before the end in order to have dinner in the restaurant. I had finished dinner and was idly looking around me, when I suddenly saw Olatunde going towards the entrance a few yards away. He had put on a little weight, otherwise he had not apparently changed very much.

I quickly got up and went towards him. 'Doctor Olatunde, I presume', I said, smiling.

He failed to recognize me for a moment. Then his eyes lit up and he gave me a broad grin. 'Well, well, this is a pleasant surprise! A friend from the fatherland! How nice to see you!'

We shook hands, and since he had also had his dinner we went into the lounge to have some coffee. We sat talking for some minutes about our voyage on the *Apapa*, then eventually got on to the subject of what we

had been doing in recent years.

'Are you on leave?' he asked.

'Yes, I am. But not from Nigeria. I'm working in the Middle East at the moment.'

'What a pity! They still need people like you in Nigeria.'

I felt that I was being gently patronised, that he assumed I was still the naive, well-meaning person he had met twelve years before.

'I don't know about that,' I said, 'but I have many happy memories of Nigeria. I'll certainly go back for a visit some day. How about you? Are you in England on holiday?'

There was a long pause. 'Ah, my friend, I've taken a leaf out of your book. I've become an expatriate. I'm living in London permanently now. I haven't been in Nigeria for almost four years.'

'Sounds like a promotion. Are you in the Nigerian High Commission?'

'Goodness, no! Something much better than that!' He bestowed on me a distinctly sardonic grin. 'I'm my own man now. I'm a landlord. I own a number of flats here in London. I let them mostly to Africans either visiting or settling in this green and pleasant land.'

'But what about Nigeria? The situation has deteriorated considerably there in the past few years. What about all the things that still have to be done in your own country? I remember you used to talk a lot about being a son of the soil. Surely you haven't given up your own national struggle, have you?'

Again he smiled. 'It's probably given me up by now,' he said. 'After independence I continued my political activities. But it soon became a bit precarious, especially after the army took over. Eventually I got some money together and came to London. Things aren't what they were. I don't think you'd like Nigeria nowadays!'

I could hardly disagree about that. 'But it's your country and it's independent now. It's what you worked for and talked about all those years. And everything is only just beginning there. There's so much waiting to be achieved! Surely you'll go back sometime, won't you?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'I very much doubt it. My life is very comfortable here. My wife loves living in London and the children are all doing well at school. My youngest son was born here, so he'll grow up to be a real Englishman.'

'But what about that sacred Nigerian soil? You seem to have changed even more than I have, Ola,' I said.

There came a deep, memorable chuckle. 'No, not really. I'm still very much the man I was. I still practice a bit of law on a part-time basis and I'm still a socialist — Labour Party, of course!'

'But don't you long to be back in Nigeria sometimes?'

He firmly shook his head. 'London's a wonderful place to live in. And besides there aren't all those miles and miles of trees.'

SOUTH ASIA TAKES A BIG STEP TOWARDS DISARMAMENT

by Thomas Land

PAKISTAN has called for a five-nation conference with India and China as well as the United States and the Soviet Union to seek ways of curbing the escalation of nuclear threat in South Asia. The proposition meets a crucial demand by India which has hitherto consistently rejected proposals for regional non-proliferation accords on the grounds that China would not participate.

The collapse of Soviet influence in Asia and the fundamental current changes in relations between the superpowers may have created an opportunity to relax the intensifying regional arms race. A breakthrough could lead to a measure of prosperity for many millions of people in the three Asian countries, still among the poorest in the world, which have squandered untold riches to finance their nuclear weapons programmes. All three operate beyond the 1970 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, but China has just announced its decision to sign the accords.

Pakistan has developed a nuclear deterrent to meet the military might of neighbouring India, but it has lost lavish long-term financial assistance from the United States.

India has built its nuclear arsenal and sophisticated delivery systems in response to fear of aggression by China, yet feels exposed in the absence of its protective military umbrella provided until recently by the Soviet Union.

China has lost its strategic importance to the United States as a balancing force in relations with the Soviet Union and has been exposed to pressure to stop the sales of nuclear and rocket technology to countries like Pakistan, Iran and Algeria.

China is in political turmoil. Its arms sales seem to be directed by generals unburdened by policy considerations and seeking merely to raise foreign exchange for the purchase of modern weapons systems for their own forces.

India's nuclear weapons policy has been formulated in direct response to the humiliation suffered in 1962 when the Chinese army poured over its poorly defended northern frontier at Arunachal Pradesh. India tested a nuclear device in 1974, using plutonium from a Canadian-supplied reactor. It also developed a special relationship with China's big Communist rival, the Soviet Union. An indigenous ballistic missile successfully tested two years ago can deliver the Indian bomb within a radius of 2,400 km covering parts of China — and all of Pakistan.

This is an intolerable challenge to Pakistan which has fought three wars with India. Its own nuclear weapons programme was launched shortly after the Indian test explosion beneath the Rajasthan desert. Last year, when tension rose over the disputed state of Kashmir, both India and Pakistan

were thought to be readying their nuclear weapons for imminent deployment against each other.

Both countries claim that their nuclear programmes are directed exclusively towards peaceful industrial energy generation as well as scientific research. They have promised to refrain from attacking each other's nuclear installations.

While India looked towards Moscow, Pakistan forged special ties with China and the US. The Pakistani bomb has been developed largely through the fuel centrifuge enrichment process with technology acquired on the open market and by stealth.

Pakistan acknowledges that it has the knowledge and the ability to assemble the bomb but denies that it has done so. It has successfully test-fired an indigenous intermediate-range (300 km) surface-to-surface rocket, purchased a highly accurate short-range (200 km) rocket system from China and modified some of its American-built F-16 fighter aircraft enabling them to carry nuclear weapons.

American military intelligence sources believe that Pakistan's enrichment programme producing weapons-grade uranium has been recently intensified at Kahuta, a nuclear research establishment 40 km from Islamabad.

For long, the Americans turned a blind eye to the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme. In the 1980s, Pakistan was vital to American interests in containing the Russians in neighbouring Afghanistan; and the country became the third biggest recipient, after Israel and Egypt, of American military and civilian development assistance.

The implosion of Soviet power leading to the withdrawal of the Russian occupational forces from Afghanistan has changed that. Last October, the White House was unable to assure Congress that Pakistan was not a nuclear weapons power.

Under a 1985 law designed to discourage nuclear proliferation, Congress responded by suspending more than $500m in military and civilian assistance for 1991 and blocked almost $3bn in military supplies that had been either purchased by Pakistan or were intended as gifts.

Pakistan was unprepared for the blow. It is now paying prohibitive market prices for the spares essential to maintain its weapons systems, such as the F-16, dependent on American technology.

Its navy and air force are said to be particularly hard hit by the suspension of American assistance. Many influential Pakistani analysts suggest that China should be invited to become the country's chief supplier of military hardware. Others doubt whether China is capable of filling the gap.

Instead, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is trying to persuade the Americans to change their minds without even responding to their demand to cease the uranium enrichment programme.

He has sent a carefully picked, high powered delegation to Washington, but it has returned apparently without success. He has retired General Mirza Aslam Beg, the outspoken army chief who has offended the Americans by offering Pakistani nuclear technology to Iran and expressing

support for President Saddam Hussein of Iraq during the Gulf War.

Sharif's proposal for a five-power conference to stabilize the regional balance of power has been welcomed by Indian as well as American diplomats as significant, sensitive and hopeful. 'I would like to propose that the US, the Soviet Union and China consult with and meet India and Pakistan to discuss and resolve the issue of nuclear proliferation in South Asia,' he said.

'The aim of the meeting should be to arrive at an agreement for keeping this region free of nuclear weapons.'

Such a conference could well fit into Washington's concept of a new world order emerging from the collapse of Soviet imperialism. And India is prepared to go to great lengths to improve relations with the US.

P. V. Narasimha Rao, the newly elected Indian prime minister, has promised to do 'everything' to strengthen his country's ties with Washington.

He has described America's 'old perception' that India was leaning towards the Soviet Union and hostile to the US as 'outdated and irrelevant'.

He regards India's relationship with the US as crucial especially in the light of the changes of the very nature of Soviet power and its projection to Asia as well as Eastern Europe.

India has been affected profoundly by Soviet efforts to withdraw from big power confrontation. The 1971 Indo-Soviet friendship treaty with its implicit nuclear guarantee gave India some sense of security from the perceived threat of Chinese aggression for nearly two decades — until the two Communist giants recently resolved their differences.

The changing global balance of power has strengthened the influence of Indian strategists who argue their country must look to its own military capability to protect its territorial integrity and regional interests.

The high and constant state of military preparedness is reflected in a rapidly developing advanced technological infrastructure. The National Defence Research and Development Organization is run on a $1bn annual budget. The country is believed to be building an H-bomb several times the size of the device which it tested in 1974, and holding enough plutonium to make up to 10 bombs.

And it has developed a varied family of indigenous missiles. The latest and most advanced among them is the two-stage rocket Agni (Hindi for fire) which can deliver a one-ton payload anywhere in South Asia and can reach as far as Afghanistan, Iran and China. It can be armed with nuclear or chemical weapons as well as high explosives.

The country maintains the world's fourth biggest military establishment after the Soviet Union, China and the US, with more than 1.3m men permanently under arms.

Its power and regional ambitions were recently demonstrated abroad in the deployment of tens of thousands of 'peace keeping' troops in Sri Lanka, and later again in the arrest of mercenaries staging an abortive coup in the Maldives.

Fear of a renewed Chinese threat has thus transformed India into a

dominant regional power in turn generating ripples of unease among countries as distant as Indonesia and Australia. The only country in the area apparently unconcerned with all this is China.

The world's sixth largest arms exporter — long down the list from the US and the Soviet Union — China has at last promised to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, a global complex of assurances designed to restrain the spread of nuclear weapons. This will be an enormously important development probably leading to a relaxation of tension in several theatres starting with South Asia.

China has maintained a consistent arms export policy for more than a decade, selling billions of dollars worth of nuclear and missile technology without apparent concern for long-term strategic or political considerations. Its sales have gone to the Middle East, South Africa and Latin America. It even sold at least 130 tons of heavy water through a German broker to India for use in a nuclear weapons programme aimed against China itself.

Algeria is currently building an atomic reactor with Chinese technology in a programme intended to make the first Arab bomb, according to an important new study issued by the authoritative Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control. Iran, which is still affected by the devastation of its war with Iraq, is believed also to have enlisted Chinese assistance to produce a nuclear counter-deterrent.

But China's export performance is likely to change. Observers note that China has been speaking with two distinct voices for some time on issues of nuclear proliferation, revealing a significant internal conflict of interests.

While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs seems to favour restraint, the actual sales are being pushed through by the specialized state corporations. The corporation managers, who are themselves controlled by the military, can often over-ride the policies of the ministry because they are the children or close relatives of the top party leaders (including Deng Xiaoping). And the generals, who thus control an immense manipulative chain of power, want nothing more than to raise hard currency to modernize their own forces, which could be attained at a much smaller price.

The paradox exposes an opportunity. Given co-ordinated and sensitively applied pressure by the other major powers backed by genuine restraint at the world arms sales bazaar, the voice of moderation could perhaps be helped to triumph and China coaxed to a South Asian disarmament conference.

[Thomas Land is an author and foreign correspondent who writes on global affairs.]

THE WAR POETS OF 1639: CAREW, SUCKLING AND LOVELACE

by Donald Bruce

THE spring of 1639, during which Charles I marched north from York against his vexed Scottish subjects, was capricious even for that latitude. Whenever the rain slackened, it made way only for a period of moist heat, dispersed in turn by an almost welcome thunderstorm. In his camp at Berwick the troops were peevish, although too dispirited for outright mutiny. Now and then in their displeasure they fired bullets at random through the tops of the tents in their own lines. Of the three court-poets whom the King had taken with him, Thomas Carew complained most of 'the cold nights out by the banks of Tweed'.[1] Sir John Suckling, although a hardier partisan than Carew, came off badly with a pleurisy he blamed upon his 'violent drinking of Tweed water' in the company of his men after a retreat from Kelso.[2] Richard Lovelace suffered nothing worse than his own impatience with the irresolution of the King and his generals. They included the Earl of Arundel, appointed commander-in-chief for heraldic reasons, and his lieutenant, the Earl of Essex, whose reasons for disliking the House of Stuart were plain to everyone except its head.

Life under canvas did not daunt the King, as he sat evenly composing proclamations and countermanding licences for the sale of herrings in London.[3] Yet it daunted Carew. He survived it for less than a year: the following January the King had occasion to mourn his poet and gentleman-in-waiting. Charles I should have left the poor diseased voluptuary at home amongst the silks and felicities and bare, tenebrous bosoms of the Queen's ladies, in which shadows only jewelry splashed and flickered, remote from mountains, tempests and what Carew described, in hyperbolical dismay, as an everlasting winter. For their part, the Scottish Covenanters, many of them warmed by something stronger than Tweed water, thought nothing of sleeping for weeks on the ground in their boots and cloaks, or waiting all night in arms during the fiercest of storms.[4] They had only one poet among them — Montrose, the author, admittedly, of just a handful of slight lyrics, but an author whose life itself was heroic poetry. Having for a time opposed the King's folly, Montrose would later go far towards saving him from its effects.

Whilst Charles I had trifled northwards, whilst he had instituted equestrian games in York, arranged for the printing of a sermon on the royal prerogative in Durham, and ordered the removal of some unsightly galleries in the churches in Newcastle, Montrose, aided by Alexander Leslie (a sharp-eyed, intrepid old crookedness, battered but not exhausted by the religious wars in Europe, in which he had been one of the marshals of Gustavus Adolphus) had abruptly cleared the Highlands of the King's supporters. Since a simple encircling of the Covenanters was the only

strategy the King had, he arrived in Berwick in need of a plan. The Earl of Arundel crossed the border to read a proclamation in a neighbouring village, where some women tried to sell him eggs.[5] The Earl of Holland rode out to Kelso with his cavalry, viewed a party of Covenanters with distaste, and rode back again, only to be challenged to a duel by one of his officers, the Earl of Newcastle, who considered himself to have been slighted by the position he had been assigned in the excursion.[6] Leslie, used to less absurd fights, perceived at a glance the frippery of the royal expedition, and resolved to put on a show of his own. At Duns Law, across the Tweed but in the King's sight, he mounted his army. Charles gazed at the rebels for a while through his 'viewing glass', then thought it best to make some ambiguous concessions and march off.

The three poets whom Charles I took with him were not merely contemporaries: they lived together in close quarters at his court, and their careers threaded the close-spun social network of the time. During that period the royal palaces at Whitehall and Hampton Court abounded in the myrmidons of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, and a royal favourite. Suckling was the nephew of the Earl of Middlesex, who had providently married George Villiers's aunt. Carew's he-cousin had married Suckling's she-cousin. Lovelace married the sister-in-law of Lady Audrey Villiers, who in turn was descended in two different lines from the founder of that family. During the winter preceding the Scottish expedition the three poets were together at Whitehall as gentlemen-in-waiting to the King.[7] They enjoyed what they regarded as the privilege of intimate attendance on him: they drew back his bed-curtains, handed him his shirt, admitted his visitors and carried his messages. At the table they gave him his napkin, mixed his wine with water, tasted his food for poison, and carried his breadbasket in procession. Droll though these duties may seem, they were coveted. No doubt they gave the gentlemen-in-waiting a degree of private influence with the King: Charles I arranged an advantageous marriage for Suckling.[8] Their poems were set by the royal musicians and sung before the King and Queen. They were close to the sovereign's heart: they throbbed with its pulses. In the spring, when Charles decided to let the gentlemen of his court try their chivalry against the Scots, the three poets followed him on his northern expedition: Carew, amongst the equerries and bewailing the cold; Suckling leading his red-pantalooned cavalry into non-battle; Lovelace, a subaltern in the standstill so-called Bishops' War.

Thomas Carew was the son of a consequential old lawyer who had become Master of Chancery. The father made his way by application to duty. The son, a gangling, sharp-faced poet with a deceptive air of alacrity, made his way by talented indolence. The father, like William Cecil or Nicholas Bacon, hoped to advance his family through its merit, but openings for a Cecil or a Bacon were few. The difference between the successful Elizabethan despotism and the unsuccessful Caroline despotism was that Queen Elizabeth was clever. King Charles preferred a Villiers and a Wentworth. With nothing unneglected, Thomas Carew outdid his

father in the King's esteem. After failing in the law through too little diligence and in the diplomatic service through too much flippancy, Carew was rescued by the caprice, merely, of the King, whose court he diverted by writing graceful libertine lyrics and a masque in which not only Howards, Herberts, Cavendishes and Egertons acted, but also the monarch himself. At the court Carew prospered further by one display of tact, unusual in him, when, lighting the King into the Queen's chamber, he discerned her dubiously engaged in a recess with the Earl of St. Albans, and deliberately dropped his candle.[9] Thereafter he received many favours from the shy Queen. Carew's death in 1640 made no stir in that period of the Long Parliament and the National Covenant against Papacy and Prelacy. His pale facetiousness, his wan felicity, faded out unnoticed in the glare of a conflagrating kingship.

Sir John Suckling was a young Falstaff turned poet, although it should not be forgotten how young, or that he died at the wretchedly early age of thirty-two — a slight, bristling figure with his bright-eyed, heavy face and his rosy starling-beak nose. Suckling was the son of a lawyer who had emerged from the minor gentry of Norfolk to keep the accounts of the household of Charles I, which must have cost him many a sigh, and so to join his Privy Council. Partly for the sake of Suckling's father, Charles I made much of him, knighting him at the age of twenty-one and furthering his interests as much as he could. For his own part, Suckling, although he cast a ribald eye over Queen Henrietta Maria, was attached to the court, and to the King himself, with a romantic loyalty surprising in such a sceptic: Quintilian mentions Ancient Roman actors so moved by their parts that when they took off their masks they were seen to be in tears. Suckling's congratulatory ode to the King on New Year's Day, 1640, was almost the last outburst of Cavalier gaiety:

> May no ill vapours cloud the skie,
> Bold storms invade the Sovraigntie,
> But gales of joy.[10]

By the time the year was out both Archbishop Laud and the Earl of Strafford were in prison, and there would be little cause for rejoicing among the King's friends.

Suckling, who inherited his father's money too early, devoted himself to gambling, wine and extravagant finery, so much so that he died in poverty. His last prodigality was the troop of one hundred horsemen he recruited and equipped for the masque-like Bishops' War. In spite of such excesses, Suckling was no fashionable waster. His learning, accomplishments and experience deserved a better direction. He wrote, during a short and hectic life, three plays and two volumes of poems which included translations of little-known pieces in French and Latin. He composed a tract in defence of the Church and sponsored a translation of Ovid. He was, in secret, a scholar. Suckling preferred wits to noblemen, although the people he liked best of all were dark-eyed tavern-wenches and his fellow-gamesters. He did not care much for the company of a lord:

> for they were in those days damnably proud and arrogant and the French would say that *My Lord d'Angleterre* look't *comme un Mastif-dog*, But now the age is more refined.[11]

After his expedition against the Scots, which was really a retreat, Suckling became a captain in the King's wars against his rebellious subjects. He was briefly a Member of Parliament on the Royalist side until he was, calamitously, driven into exile in France.

All three poets express a simple, romantic devotion to kingship. When Lovelace, going to the wars, tells Lucasta, 'I could not love thee (Deare) so much,/ Loved I not Honour more,' he means that their love is the manifestation of a shared culture (like that of Mirabell and Millamant in *The Way of the World)* to which he is bound, above all, by his honour. That culture was defined in temporal terms by Strafford and in spiritual terms by Laud, and comprehended in the person of the King. Strafford stated in his final, eloquent but futile speech at his trial — deserted as he was by the King whose claims he was pressing — his belief that the rights of property and the prerogative of the crown depended, through the common law, upon each other. The presence of the King, however dull and haughty, sustained the whole social system as Lovelace saw it. Royalism was the tradition by which that *prieux chevalier* subsisted.

In his epode, *To Lucasta from Prison,* Lovelace lists the things he loves best. He is zealous for peace; he adheres to the Parliament; he wishes to succour endangered religion, 'Fair thorough-shot Religion.' He is eager to preserve liberty and its concomitance, private property, 'my Birth-right, Property':

> What can that be, when it is knowne
> There's nothing you can call your owne?

He welcomes reform:

> But not a Reformation so
> As to reforme were to orethrow.

Yet, he affirms, all these causes, and Lucasta herself, may disappoint him, whilst his bond with the King will never do so:

> What then remains, but the only spring
> Of all our loves and joyes? The KING.

He invokes the King as if, a Caesar deifled in his own lifetime, Charles I had already been raised to the heavens:

> Oh from thy glorious Starry Waine
> Dispense on me one sacred Beame
> To light me where I soon may see
> How to serve you.[12]

These are the terms in which Horace, not much to his credit, addressed the Emperor Augustus. Like Carew and Suckling, Lovelace had lost one parent early in life. Orphans seek loyalties, and an anchorage, for themselves.

Lovelace was shocked when the King appeased the Scots at Berwick: 'Now the *Peace* is made at the Foe's rate,' he protested.[13] Worse was to come for Lovelace with the establishment of the Commonwealth. Dismayed, he wrote in his *Mock Song,* 'our Dragon has vanquished St. George'.[14] The defeated Royalists are like the subject of his next poem, the bitterly mock-heroic *A Fly Caught in a Cobweb.* Their rapt flights have brought them low: 'Thy wings have fetter'd now thy feet'. Recalling Menenius's speech in *Coriolanus,* he claims that the belly now rules, not the head;

and that belly has absorbed them in its darkness:

> thy all-belly's foe (round Elf)
> Hath quarter'd thee within himself.[15]

Charles I's drift, during his period of absolute rule, was towards making his kingdom more like a continental monarchy. He was the first English sovereign since Henry VIII to have travelled outside the British Isles. In the galleries of the King of Spain, among the Titians inherited from the victors of Mühlberg and Lepanto, Charles immersed himself in the art and sentiment of the Counter Reformation. Archbishop Laud's concording dream was of a reunion of the Catholic and Anglican Churches. With George Herbert, Laud lamented church-rents and schisms: the blown petals of the rose coloured by Christ's blood.[16] Both King and prelate hoped to make Britain more European; although they succeeded only in perpetuating on British soil the dissensions of Europe, and the religious war which had long troubled the mainland.

Since few of the Royalist poets were out of sympathy with the Counter Reformation, which permeated the work of the Italian poets and painters whom they admired, to that extent their awareness, like that of the King, was more continental than that of their Elizabethan and Jacobean precursors. The Italy of Crashaw and Fanshawe was hardly the depraved Italy of Webster and Middleton. Lovelace sometimes writes with a sensibility which is not only religious but also Catholic, and would not be out of place in the poetry of Crashaw. Of prayer, Lovelace asserts:

> Children and Fooles the words repeate,
> But Anch'rites pray in tears and sweate.[17]

He reveres the holy passion of nuns:

> Ye panting Virgins that do meet
> Their Loves within the winding-sheet.[18]

In his dedication of *Lucasta*, Lovelace compares his poems to gems of inferior value, but offered from a full heart, hung around the neck of the effigy of the Madonna at Loreto, the shrine where Crashaw spent his last months. Poignantly Lovelace describes the needy penitent who brings to the shrine 'One poore false Pearl, but ten true tears'.[19]

Lovelace's ancestors had owned land in Kent since the beginning of the fourteenth century; land which Lovelace sold partly in the Royalist cause, so that his last years were spent in want. He sank by his allegiance to the crown, like many another gentleman in those times. The Gentleman Waiter Extraordinary who had come to the court in splendour declined from one dismal lodging-house to others still more sordid, in the drabness of Puritan London; himself becoming shabbier and shabbier and, at the last, threadbare and out-of-elbow, blurring in his lifetime into his own spectre.

The cumbersome journey, with a force of over twenty thousand men, which had taken the three poets to Scotland, had been the King's largest extravagance. Pictures, masques and buildings were nothing to it. Sir Paul Pindar, the Fugger of Stuart England, had lent the King one hundred thousand pounds. Much of the money had been spent on shoddy equipment bought in haste from jobbers in the Low Countries, substandard surplus from the Thirty Years' War. The bandoliers were made of

cardboard. The pikes were shaky and too short. It did not matter: they were never used. Lord Arundel had armed part of his army with the bows and arrows which had served so well at Crécy and Agincourt.

The King himself saved a little money for his campaign against the Scots by reducing the prices he had agreed to pay for several pictures by Sir Anthony van Dyck.[20] Suckling busied himself in selling off the white doublets and scarlet breeches in which he had clad, at an expense of twelve thousand pounds, the cavalry he had led into gorgeous retreat at Kelso, in the flight of the vivid pantaloons.[21] It had been the mildest of all wars. 'There went an army from the South,' Suckling ominously wrote to a friend in London, 'in which there was not one man lost, nor any taken prisoner but the King'.[22]

NOTES

1. Thomas Carew. *Poems*, ed Dunlop, Oxford, 1949, xliii & 86.
2. John Suckling. *Works*, ed Clayton, Oxford, I 146.
3. C. V. Wedgwood. *The King's Peace*, London, 1955, 265.
4. ibid, 273.
5. Ibid, 271.
6. Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars*, Oxford, 1849, I 177.
7. Anthony Wood. *Athenae Oxonienses*, ed Bliss, London, 1813-20, III 460.
8. Suckling, I, xxxv.
9. Hist. Mss. Com., VII 244.
10. Suckling I 85.
11. John Aubrey. *Brief Lives*, ed Clark, Oxford, 1898, II 241.
12. Richard Lovelace, *Poems*, ed Wilkinson, Oxford, 1930, 51.
13. ibid, 81.
14. ibid, 155.
15. idem.
16. George Herbert. *English Poems*, ed. Patrides, London, 1974, 150.
17. Lovelace, 44.
18. ibid, 118.
19. ibid, 25.
20. Claude Phillips. *Picture Gallery of Charles I*, London, 1896, 40-41. Van Dyck's retainer of two hundred pounds was already five years in arrears.
21. Suckling, I xlviii.
22. Ibid, I 147.

[Donald Bruce's satirical novel, *Amaryllis Brown: the Last Pastoral Romance*, was published at the end of last month.]

During 1992, to mark the 350th anniversary of the outbreak of the Civil War, an exhibition of military artefacts connected with the conflict will tour a variety of towns that played a part in the events of 1642. The exhibition is sponsored by *The Times*. (Editor)

HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC — GRANDEUR AND MISERY

by Muriel Julius

WHAT could be more cruelly ironic than that the painter best able to convey the movement and exhilaration of the dance, was prevented by a genetic mishap from participating himself. It is impossible to separate the art of Toulouse-Lautrec from his biography. The declassed aristocrat slumming in Montmartre; the early death hastened by syphilis and alcoholism; the life in the *maisons closes* painted in a way no other artist has surpassed — all Hollywood fodder.

Irrationally overlooked in recent years, he breathed life into the various worlds in which he moved: the uncles, aunts, cousins of the rich family into which he was born; the writers, musicians, painters and *boulevardiers* with whom he socialized; and the clubs, cabarets, theatres and brothels he made real for us. Every age has its own gait, glance, gesture: through Lautrec's eyes fin de siècle Paris is revealed, the City of Light that Haussmann created for Napoleon III.

Six years ago Richard Thomson, Senior Lecturer in the History of Art at Manchester University realized that no retrospective exhibition of Lautrec's work had been seen in Britain since 1961. Thanks to his tenacity one hundred and seventy paintings, drawings, posters and lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec can be seen at the Hayward Gallery, London, until 19th January, 1992.

Lautrec was born in 1864 near Albi, a fortified town dominated by a truly fearsome cathedral. His father, Count Alphonse de Toulouse-Lautrec, an outrageous eccentric, could trace his ancestry back to the thirteenth century Albigensian wars. His interests were hunting and falconry. He would walk the town with a falcon on his arm which he claimed drank only holy water. He rode in the Bois de Boulogne dressed as a Cossack horseman and once attended a family luncheon wearing a ballet dancer's tutu.

His family made him quit the army to marry his dauntingly pious first cousin — an unhappy union. Until he was fourteen their son's stature was normal. He pursued all the activities expected of him; he rode and swam, cycled and shot. Then he faltered and this was put down to two accidents in which he broke first one leg, then the other. Today it is thought he was the victim of pyknodysostosis, a disease leading to dwarfism, a result of the frequent intermarrying in his family. Other symptoms of the disease developed — thick, violet-rose protuberant lips, unusually oily skin, enlarged nostrils. Despite his eyes which Yvette Guilbert, the music-hall singer described as 'fine, large, richly warm and astonishingly bright' it was clear he had little chance of success in the insular world of country aristocracy.

The Toulouse-Lautrec family were unexpectedly artistic. Not only his father but his uncles, Comte Raymond and the adored Comte Charles

were dedicated amateurs. While still only nine, Comte Alphonse arranged for his favourite painter, René Princeteau, a deaf-mute, to give his son lessons. It was Princeteau who introduced him to the pleasures of vaudeville and the Cirque Fernando. His formal art education began in 1882, first with Léon Bonnat and, after a year, in Cormon's studio. He met there many of the artists, including Vincent Van Gogh and Emile Bernard, who remained lifelong friends. In 1890, a few days before his death, Van Gogh wrote to his brother, Theo: 'Lautrec's picture, the one of the musician is amazing, I was very moved by it'. This referred to the originally posed portrait of the bassoonist, Désiré Dilau (No. 30) a distant cousin of Lautrec. Dilau was the central figure in Edgar Degas' painting 'L'Orchestre de l'Opéra'. In one of his few generous comments, Degas praised Lautrec's portrait, praise Lautrec considered the greatest encouragement he had ever had. Degas and Forain were his gods.

From his letters we know that Lautrec had charming manners, that he was witty and sophisticated and well able to control his financial and artistic affairs. Nearly fifty years after their student days his biographer, Francois Gauzi wrote ('Autour de Lautrec'):

> Lautrec had the gift of endearing people to him, all his friends were absolutely devoted to him; he never spoke provocatively to anyone and never sought to exercise his wit at the expense of others.

Lautrec had difficulty in walking. Louis Anquetin, another student, endeared himself because he always pretended Lautrec's slow pace didn't bother him. From an early age Lautrec focused on legs. The remarkable painting, done when only sixteen, of his father driving his mail-coach shows four high-stepping horses in rapid action (No. 5). Jane Avril Dancing (No. 80) and, most remarkably 'La Clownesse Assise' showing Cha-U-Kao sitting with her black clad legs wide apart staring into space — bought by King Milan of Serbia — one of the few paintings Lautrec ever managed to sell — all concentrate on legs.

Lautrec treated his handcaps with deprecating irony. Charm and humour were among the weapons he used to deflect notice of his infirmities. His decision to settle in the tough realistic world of Montmartre was indeed courageous. There tongues loosened by drink could be cruel, and they were not his class. Class plays a large role in Lautrec's work. His ability to capture exactly the expression, posture and personality of his sitters without evasions, comment or distortion is perhaps his greatest gift.

There is a world of difference between two of Lautrec's young friends, the bowler-hatted painter, Gustave Lucien Dennery (No. 18) relaxing on Lautrec's divan, and Paul Sesau, the photographer, (No. 33) silk-hatted, standing elegantly amid Lautrec's canvases, leaning on his cane.

Lautrec shared what I consider almost the one endearing characteristic of Frenchmen — their adoration of women. Red hair apparently was Lautrec's big 'turn-on'. The dancers Jane Avril, his particular friend, and La Goulue from the Moulin Rouge had red hair. So did the stunning actress, Marcelle Lender (No. 105) who Lautrec went to see twenty times in Hervé's operetta 'Chilperic' because of her magnificent back. And there is the portrait 'Carmen' painted in 1884 when Lautrec was only twenty.

She was a working-class girl whom he met in the street. She had a head of burnished bronze hair. She glows out of the dark background of this portrait (No. 24) like some Pre-Raphaelite icon. Lautrec painted her four times and made many drawings of her. He lost all interest when she turned brunette.

Carmen is painted in the classic technique Lautrec learned with Bonnat. In his portrait of Suzanne Valadon 'Poudre de Riz' (No. 41) he uses a Pissaro-like, divisionist, experimental technique. Valadon who was Lautrec's mistress for a few years, is seen sitting with delicate arms folded across a small table on which stands a box of rice powder. Nothing in this sad little face suggests her colourful life, as trapeze artist, model, mother of the painter Maurice Utrillo and later, a powerful painter herself, who was immortalized by Renoir in 'La Dance à la Ville', painted four years earlier.

Of the six hundred or so paintings Lautrec made, it is thought he sold fewer than forty. Many were given away to sitters. Only one commissioned portrait is known. From 1891 to 1896 he decided to concentrate on prints, and it was his prints by which he was best known in his own day as it is today. Who now would remember Aristide Bruant, Yvette Guilbert, Jane Avril, let alone May Belfort, May Milton and Loié Fuller but for Lautrec's posters and prints?

As artists realized that affordable prints would make their work available to a vast audience, new and exciting printing processes emerged. From his very first print, Lautrec's originality was evident. This was his largest and most complicated poster and shows the provocative dancer La Goulue and her partner, Valentin le Désossé, whose sensual suppleness won him the nickname 'the Boneless', at the Moulin Rouge (No. 67). By combining varied media and by spraying a heavily charged brush of paint through a sieve, he achieved an entirely new spattering effect which gave a rich mix of colour.

This technique is seen at its most sophisticated in the series of six prints of Loié Fuller (No. 87). Her dance consisted of a skilful swirl of immense skirts and veils enhanced by revolving coloured light effects. It is her spiralling swiftness that Lautrec captures. Every print has a different combination of colours, sometimes as many as seven, controlled by the artist himself. Most are sprinkled with gold or silver powders; all were hand trimmed. They were intended for the de-luxe collector.

The influence of Japanese prints, which French artists had been buying for thirty years, is all powerful in the unforgettable image of the cabaret singer, Aristide Bruant. The organization of space, the large flat areas of colour made possible because we are offered Bruant's back view, and the sinuous flowing outlines all bear witness to this (No. 79).

Yvette Guilbert was Lautrec's intellectual equal and his most frequent subject. He shows her older and uglier than her twenty-seven years — a caricatural device. With surprise one sees her photograph in the exhibition — a sweet faced young woman with a tiny waist. To her great admirer, Gustave Geffroy she was '... a chilling ironist; an exact *diseuse* full of

inward laughter, sensual and caustic... the top of the Paris bill adopted by those she mocks'. The sixteen prints (No. 88) Lautrec made to illustrate Geffroy's book, show her expressive features in many moods. Perhaps this artifice expressed Lautrec's sublimated desire to transform himself.

Lautrec's obsession with alienness found its symbiosis in brothels. The house he favoured most was at 24 rue des Moulins. It provided him with a substitute home, family, sanctuary. It was magnificently furnished with antiques and tapestries. It had a Chinese room, a Gothic chamber with tastefully arranged masochistic treats, and a resplendent Moorish Hall. Lautrec's 'Au Salon de la rue des Moulins' (No. 137) shows it. There are the girls, attended by Madame, awaiting their clients. (A recently published book, 'L'Age d'Or des Maisons Closes' has photographs by Romi of almost two hundred of these houses. It is published by Albin Michel).

Lautrec brought the girls bonbons and interested himself in their lives. In return they spoiled and petted him, permitted him to share their most intimate moments, washing, dressing, in bed together, lining up for medical inspection. They are painted without cruelty or comment, often on cardboard in a unique cross hatching technique in oils thinned with turpentine that looks remarkably spontaneous. These paintings are unique too in expressing the painter's kindness. Asked what he thought of these works Degas sneered, 'They stink of syphilis'. The prostitutes he painted are venal and coarse.

I quote from the Journal of the celebrated art dealer, René Gimpel. After visiting the Toulouse Lautrec exhibition at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs on 9th April, 1931 he wrote, 'The grandeur of Toulouse-Lautrec is his humanity. It is in their humanity that great masters surpass others. It is not enough for a work to be a chef d'oeuvre of colour or of technique, as for example 'The Artist's Studio' by Vermeer. I consider Chardin to be greater than Vermeer. Vermeer only painted pictures but Chardin recreated the warmth of the French home. The work of Toulouse-Lautrec is a thing of the heart. Its title must also be 'Grandeur and Misery of the Courtesans'.

After London the exhibition will be shown at the Grand Palais, Paris from 21st February to 1st June, 1992.

Editor's Note

A huge and beautifully illustrated catalogue has been published by Yale University Press. As well as pictures in the exhibition *Toulouse-Lautrec* has other illustrations and photographs, and some notable essays by Richard Thomson and various French scholars. This catalogue provides a valuable fund to any student of French art.

CHRISTMAS WITH QUEEN VICTORIA

by James Munson

THE scene of a young Princess making her way through the snow to bring food and comfort to a gypsy camp on Christmas Day sounds like a tale from a Victorian religious tract or a fable from the Middle Ages. In the event it was a true story and the Princess was none other than the sixteen year old Victoria. The Christmas in question was 1836 — only six months before she succeeded to the throne. The way she celebrated Christmas eventually affected almost every home in the English-speaking world.

Throughout her long life, Queen Victoria always attached great importance to Christmas. It united all her most powerful sentiments: her love of family, her devotion to Christian truth and, in time, her deep love for her husband. Prince Albert is often credited with almost inventing the English Christmas as we still know it with his introduction of the Christmas tree from Germany. Actually Victoria had known this German custom all her life. Her grandmother, Queen Charlotte, had brought the Christmas tree to England after she married King George III in 1761. Every year she would decorate her tree with small candles, wax dolls, and strings of almonds and raisins. This custom was carried on by Queen Adelaide, who was also born in Germany and was the consort of King William IV and therefore Victoria's aunt.

The two most powerful influences on Victoria's early life were also Germans, her mother, the Duchess of Kent, and her governess, Baroness Lehzen. They saw that Christmas trees were used in Kensington Palace. In 1832, the Duchess gave her thirteen year old daughter a small book in which to keep a Journal. For the rest of her life, Victoria was faithful to her diary. It eventually grew to well over 100 volumes and even though we only know it from her daughter's selections, it gives the best account of the Queen's life and opinions. In it she also kept her memories of Christmas.

In 1832, the thirteen year old Princess distributed her gifts on the morning of Christmas Eve to people such as her tutor, Dr. George Davys. In the evening after dinner the Kent household gathered in a drawing room where the Duchess rang a bell three times. They then processed into a room where the Princess saw 'two large round tables on which were placed two trees hung with lights and sugar ornaments. All the presents being placed round the tree. I had one table for myself'. Presents were an important part of the Christmas ritual. As she grew older, she often gave some of her own drawings — and she was a highly talented artist — to her mother. Some of her favourite presents came from her Uncle Leopold, the first King of the Belgians. He sent her autographs from famous people such as King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette. The ever wily uncle saw an autograph collection as a good way to stimulate his niece's interest in history.

Victoria spent most of her Christmases before she came to the throne at Kensington Palace. However her last one was at Claremont, the charming country house in Surrey that belonged to her Uncle Leopold. Victoria always had a mind that loved precise details so she not only recorded that the trip from Kensington to Claremont took 'one and three-quarter hours' by carriage but preserved lists of presents she gave and received. 'Dearest best Lehzen' gave her many gifts including two Dresden figures, a music book and a little button decorated with an angel's head that the governess herself used to wear.

In return the Princess gave her a green morocco jewel case and *The Picturesque Annual for 1837*. These Annuals were a very popular gift at the time and normally featured portraits of celebrated aristocratic ladies often accompanied by sentimental poems by the same ladies. They were in great demand that year at Claremont as the Duchess gave her daughter two of them as well as several jewels. Money was never in large supply in the Duchess's household so that the presents were not much grander than many other girls would have received. Among Victoria's gifts to her mother was that characteristic Victorian present, a bracelet made of her hair as well as of locks from the Duchess's two children by her first marriage.

The highlight of the 1836 Christmas, however, was the visit to the gypsy camp. Victoria went there several times during the Christmas season and she got her mother to send food, blankets, and fuel. The Princess was worried about the gypsy's new-born baby and Lehzen was instructed to send a royal footman with a woollen jacket for the child. In her Journal, Victoria reflected on all of this:

> I cannot say how happy I am that these poor creatures are assisted, for they are such a nice set of Gipsies, so quiet, so affectionate to one another, so discreet, not at all forward or importunate, and *so* grateful; so unlike the gossiping, fortune-telling race-gipsies ... Their being assisted makes me quite merry and happy today, for yesterday night when I was safe and happy at home in that cold night and today when it snowed so and everything looked white, I felt unhappy and grieved to think that our poor gipsy friends should perish and shiver from want.

The next Christmas, Victoria spent at Buckingham Palace, moving to Windsor on Boxing Day, for she had become Queen in June, 1837. Now she was able to indulge herself in all the pleasures that had been denied her by a strict mother. Christmas could be kept in a truly regal fashion. Yet for Victoria, the most important Christmas was really that of 1840. She had been married to Prince Albert in February and by November they were already celebrating the birth of the first of their nine children. Prince Albert wrote to his brother from Windsor: 'Christmas Eve we spent very pleasantly. Three Christmas trees adorned the hall and everyone was merry and happy. Next year the little daughter will jump around the tree, as we did not so very long ago'.

Yet for Victoria, Christmas always had a melancholic side long before Albert's death. She was acutely aware of the degree to which Albert missed his home and family in Germany. Her encouragement of the Christmas tree and other essentially German Christmas customs were also designed

to make her husband feel at home. On Christmas Eve, 1842 the Prince wrote to his father, 'This is the dear Christmas Eve, on which I have so often listened with impatience for your step, which was to usher us into the Gift-room. Today I have two children of my own to make gifts to'. Albert noted the two royal infants 'are full of happy wonder at the German Christmas-tree and its radiant candles'. The Christmas festivities carried on at Windsor for several days. On New Year's eve, a dance was held at the stroke of midnight, a flourish of trumpets was sounded as was done in Germany. This greatly moved the Queen for it 'quite affected dear Albert, who turned pale, and had tears in his eyes and pressed my hand very warmly. It touched me too, for I felt that he must think of his dear native country, which he has left for me'.

These German traditions fascinated younger members of the Court. One Maid of Honour, Eleanor Stanley, sent her mother a long account of Christmas at Windsor in 1847. From this we learn that all the Household were invited to the Oak-Room about seven on Christmas Eve. There was a table with 'a little fir-tree, in the German fashion, covered with bonbons, gilt walnuts, and little coloured tapers'. She was able to take one of the bonbons to send as a gift to her little sister. Piled round the tree were presents, each with a slip of paper giving the recipients name written by the Queen. Eleanor Stanley received a gold chain which held a heart shaped locket decorated with diamonds. The gentlemen of the Household also received jewels such as pearl studs. (This would always be one of Victoria's favourite gifts for the men in her service.) All were given various engravings of the Queen and her increasing family as well as the *Almanacs*, which were still popular. There was now some Nuremberg gingerbread as well. (Albert, who did so much to introduce German customs into England, also tried to do the opposite. Thus one Christmas he sent his brother 'two silver vessels as Christmas presents. They are to be used as Champagne coolers. You must put ice in them and lay the Champagne bottles on the ice. Here, in England it is the custom to place them, at the corners of the table.')

After seeing their own presents, the Household moved in a procession to see the tables adorned with presents exchanged within the Royal Family. The Queen and the Prince had given the Duchess of Kent life-sized statues of two of their daughters: Victoria and Albert early established the tradition of giving each other especially commissioned paintings to add to the art collection which was one of Albert's main interests. Victoria was always in high spirits at Christmas and on this occasion told the Household that one artist had painted her holding her daughter as an allegorical work 'to represent the Church leaning on the bosom of the State'. In addition the royal children were encouraged to give their parents and one another special Christmas cards of their own making.

Amidst all these Germanic imports the Court still kept up the old English idea of Twelfth Night on 6 January: a tradition that had led Shakespeare to create his play of that name for Elizabeth I. The tradition of a specially created work still lingered: on one occasion a Greek play

was translated into German with music by Mendelssohn, the Queen and Prince's favourite among living composers. The Prince himself wrote music and among his works was a new setting of the Christmas hymn, 'Hark the herald angels sing'. At other Christmases the Prince would select some favourite musical work: once it was Haydn's Toy Symphony. As the symphony went on its merry way, members of the Court began to glance in the direction of the Duke of Wellington. He was already quite deaf and was falling asleep as the music carried on. No one knew what to do at the end until the Duchess of Kent went over to the great hero and repeated gently in his ear 'It is all over, Duke'.

On Twelfth Night the Court had a special 'Twelfth Cake' after which they would play a game of grabbing raisins from a dish of burning brandy — 'the gentlemen being by far the most timorous' notes Eleanor Stanley. The game ended when someone threw salt onto the dish which produced a flame giving a peculiar appearance.

Yet amidst all this grandeur Victoria never forgot those Christian sentiments that she had felt for the poor. Every year gifts and food were distributed, usually in the Riding School at Windsor. As the royal children grew up they would sometimes help in the distribution.

There were two events almost parallel with Victoria's marriage that helped to spread the royal style of celebrating Christmas as a great family occasion far beyond the confines of the Court. The penny post, to which the Queen gave much encouragement, aided the development of the Christmas card. By the end of her reign the Queen annually complained along with many of her subjects at the tiresome chore of sending either Christmas or New Year's cards yet her own example had helped to bring the problem about. The second event was the invention of illustrated magazines which carried pictures of the royal Christmas festivities. This helped to introduce them into the homes of the growing middle classes not only in Britain but throughout the Empire and America.

The Queen always enjoyed planning special presents for Prince Albert and she spent large amounts of money and time on them. When her children married, she carried on the tradition of arranging special gifts for them. Her eldest daughter, 'Vicky', married the heir to the German throne. In her letters home the Princess would often suggest some work of art she wanted as a Christmas gift. The Queen also chose gifts to remind her of home including huge pieces of cold beef. This delighted Vicky's father-in-law, the German Emperor, who declared British beef far superior to anything Germany could boast of. The gifts were also a reminder of the home and family the Princess had left behind when she went to Berlin in 1858.

In 1860 the Royal Family was, as usual, at Windsor for Christmas: no one could guess that it would be their last one. The Queen and Prince Albert were delighted at the engagement of their second daughter, Princess Alice, to Prince Louis of Hesse. In her euphoria Victoria gave permission for the Prince of Wales to smoke as long as 'he does not do so in public or in the house'. Lord Torrington, an equerry, kept the editor of *The*

Times informed about Court gossip, and wrote ecstatically about the festivities. 'I have never seen a much more agreeable sight.' As before, the Queen's three private sitting rooms had Christmas trees which were so large that they were hung from the hooks normally used for chandeliers. In addition there were smaller trees on the tables. In one room the tables held all the presents exchanged within the family. The rule was a simple one: each person could give only one present to everyone else in the family. As Victoria's mother, the Duchess of Kent, was present, along with Alice's fiancé, everyone got thirteen gifts.

On Christmas Eve presents were exchanged: 'It was royalty putting aside its state and becoming in words, acts, and deeds one of ourselves — no forms and not a vestige of ceremony'. Etiquette was laid aside and 'little princesses, who on ordinary occasions dare hardly to look at a gentleman-in-waiting, in the happiest manner showed each person they could lay hands on the treasures they had received'. Only the Queen gave jewellery and there was the traditional gift of a Nuremberg gingerbread cake.

Lord Torrington also went to see the famous Windsor kitchens where visitors were allowed in to watch, as in mediaeval times, the Christmas feast being prepared. There, roasting before the fires were at least fifty turkeys along with geese, a boar's head and a baron of beef weighing 140 pounds. As was traditional the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had sent over his present of a woodcock pie containing one hundred birds. Lord Torrington concluded his frank account: 'I never saw more real happiness than the scene of the mother and all her children: the Prince Consort lost his stiffness and your *Windsor special* had much cheerful and friendly conversation with them both'.

This 'real happiness', which Lord Torrington described, vanished in 1861 with the deaths first of the Duchess of Kent and then, only eleven days before Christmas, of Prince Albert. The Queen wrote to her eldest daughter in Prussia, 'I never thought of Christmas and put all those recollections ... away from my mind'. Henceforth Christmas would be spent at Osborne, away from the memories that now haunted the castle. Windsor meant the annual service at the Royal Mausoleum, Frogmore on 14 December, the anniversary of the Prince's death. In 1863 Victoria wrote, 'Christmas was as sad as possible'.

Even so, Victoria's naturally buoyant spirits slowly reasserted themselves and by 1872 she was personally supervising — as was her wont — the erection of two Christmas trees and the buying and distribution of presents for servants, whom she always called 'my people'. As the number came to between two and three hundred it was no small task. Another sizeable task, and one which the Queen still disliked, was the sending of Christmas cards to close friends and family, especially grandchildren: 'their name is legion' she bemoaned. When she omitted to send a card to one grandson in Germany she apologised in words that have a familiar ring to them, 'I got confused and bewildered about the ages'. A card came with her apology. The cards were especially welcome in Germany where they were unknown.

Victoria's Christmas celebrations suffered another blow in 1878 when Princess Alice died on the same date as Prince Albert — 'the dreadful fourteenth' — and there was a renewal of sad associations. 'Ever since '61 it has been clouded over and totally altered... I cannot do many things again'. When writing to her eldest daughter she quoted Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, a poem she read constantly:

> The Yuel log sparkled keen with frost,
> No wing of wind the region swept,
> But over all things brooding slept
> The quiet sense of something lost.

Once again, however, her ebullient spirits re-emerged and by the 1890s Christmas had become a high point at a Court which younger members regarded as 'dull'. In 1894 there were *tableaux vivants* (which Victoria personally supervised) and as always, masses of food. There were, in addition, courtiers, their spouses and children, her own children and grandchildren whose company she liked and with whom she found it easy to get on. Bernard Mallet, whose wife, Marie, was a Lady in Waiting, watched on Christmas Eve as the Queen, now in a wheelchair, handed presents to the Household. Marie was given 'a case of large silver gilt spoons, the usual pocket book and some odds and ends, including a man of gingerbread' thereby keeping up the custom introduced by Prince Albert. Bernard was given a silver pin. After the Queen and Princesses withdrew to allow her to examine the royal presents on display in another room, the Household 'fell on the tree and divided the spoils, filling waste paper baskets!'

On Christmas Day there was a short service with a carol and hymn and the traditional feast complete with Baron of beef, woodcock pie and boar's head. Christmas cards were reserved until Boxing Day when they were handed round or delivered by a footman. Food seems to have been the main feature. With a Household of over 300 it is not surprising that the permanent kitchen staff numbered forty-five and this did not include the Indian servants whose sole duty was to prepare the curry served at every lunch.

The sheer size of the meals prepared staggers our modern imagination and has much more in common with the fifteenth than with the twentieth century. Here is the traditional recipe for Windsor Mincemeat. Would-be imitators are warned that it makes 675 pounds:

> Ingredients: 82lb. currants, 30lb. orange peel, 30lb. lemon peel, 30lb. Cedrat, 2lb. cinnamon, 1½lb. allspice, 1½lb. cloves, 1½lb. nutmeg, ½ sugar loaf (about 7lb.), 24lb. Lisbon sugar (caster sugar), 120lb. minced beef, 120lb. suet, juice of 25 lemons, 4 bushels peeled and cored Russet apples, 4 bushels Bramley apples, 24 bottles brandy.

One mixed all the dry ingredients and then put them through a coarse grinder after which one stirred in the lemon juice and brandy.

Victoria's natural concern for others, which had led her as a child to befriend the gypsies, still made her think of others at Christmas. Workers on the royal estates were given a shoulder of lamb and special friends were sent large raised pies. These involved an immense amount of work. They were made up of turkey, chicken, pheasant and woodcock and each had

to be boned. Inside there was a stuffing of forcemeat, truffles and tongue. The woodcock was put inside the pheasant, the pheasant inside the chicken and the chicken inside the turkey. The turkey was then packed round with stuffing and a rich pastry made so that when the pie was sliced each piece had the flavour of each of the birds used. For the kitchen staff there was not only turkey, plum pudding, mince-pies and roasted chestnuts but roast cygnet as well.

Even in the last years of her life this concern for others showed itself at Christmas. During the worse days of the South African War, when Victoria felt 'low and anxious', she broke with tradition in 1899 and stayed at Windsor to put on a Christmas Tea for the wives and children of soldiers at the front. Members of the Royal Family and courtiers helped to serve at table after which 'I was rolled up and down round the tables, after which I went away for a short while to have my own tea, returning when the tree was beginning to be stripped, handing myself many of the things to the wives and dear little children'.

Barons of beef roasting on a spit, enormous Christmas trees laden with presents, mince pies in sufficient number to feed almost 700 people, Nuremberg gingerbread-men: all these went to make up a royal Christmas at Queen Victoria's Court. But whether in the 'happy years' before 1861 or in the long years of her widowhood, Christmas was always much more. It was a celebration of family life and, even more, of Christian love which Victoria extended as a girl to gypsies and as an old woman to the lonely wives of her soldiers. The Barons of beef and the enormous trees have gone but the real legacy of Queen Victoria's Christmas lives on.

[James Munson is the co-author of *Victoria: Portrait of a Queen*, published by BBC Books.]

The January number of *Contemporary Review* includes the first article of a major series on *The Foreign Policy of Spain* by Anthony Gooch and *Fighting for the Middle Ground* by Paul B. Rose.

Literary Supplement

THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE

All in a Life: Garret FitzGerald — an Autobiography. Macmillan. London, 1991. 674pp. Hardback, £25.00.

Political biographies are not uncommon events, autobiographies, occasions, but when it is the first ever autobiography of an Irish Taoiseach, prime minister, it must be a phenomenon. From its torrent of words, yet eminently readable, the man Garret FitzGerald emerges intellectually formidable, frank and honest with friend and foe, and above all as a warm-hearted family man. The many charming illustrations from the family album show this but the essentially family man comes across very strongly in the text; indeed, the dedication to his wife, Joan, is no mere convention for in each of the nineteen chapters there is some tribute to her and to their happy marriage, as well as frequent references to their children, grandchildren, and the whole extended family net-work.

Older readers who have lived through the emergence of the Irish state will find in the Prologue and in Chapter One on his early years fascinating insights into his father's key role as the minister for external affairs in the first Dáil... Dr. FitzGerald's passionate commitment to a lasting reconciliation in Ireland of both traditions comes across as a central theme in his personal and political life. Son of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother, his very birth apparently heralded a healing between his parents' political and religious division. He tells us that his arrival into this world was greeted in the ranks of Fianna Fàil, his later political opponents, as 'the child of the reconciliation', a prophecy he certainly did his best to fulfil throughout a distinguished political career. It is the North of Ireland where his roots ran deepest and 'the only part where I had relations with close ties'. It is an illuminating admission.

The title *All in a Life* perhaps has a mild degree of surprise that on looking back he had such wide and varied experience in public affairs as well as virtually four careers: a very demanding position in Air Lingus (1947-1958) which only partially satisfied his obsession with statistics; a second career as university lecturer in economics (1959-1973) at UCD where he had in fact read history and modern languages as an undergraduate; thirdly, he combined this busy life with a wide range of economic journalism, which was closely linked with his passion for the virtual regeneration of Irish social life; and lastly the politician with high reforming ideals. Up to 1964 Dr. FitzGerald regarded his diverse activities in the public service as a conscious preparation for his entry onto the platform of national and international politics.

None can read this patently honest life without being impressed by the author's idealistic motives. He wished to challenge, reform and change in order to prepare Irish society to take its place within a dynamic European community. In a word, his out-spoken article published in *Studies* (1964) enshrined much of his idealism and became something like a personal political manifesto. There he attacked conservatism, clericalism, bourgeois materialism, the anti-intellectualism of Irish life, elevating sport and drink to leading roles in society, its male dominance, and its flagrant pressure towards conformism in the schools. The consistency with which he followed these early ideals can be judged with some hindsight but is best left to the historians of modern Ireland to see if in his subsequent career there is a match of ambition, or intentions with performance. With a fair-mindedness, rare in what is after all a self-

indulgent medium, autobiography, he perceives that on a good few political issues he was very naive.

He was first elected to the Dáil in 1969 as Fine Gael member for Dublin South East, having first served in the Seanad Éireann (the Senate) since 1965, a period of his life in which he likened his role to that of Pooh Bah. On the opposition front bench he was by far the most active member of Fine Gael so much so that an *Irish Times* cartoon depicted the opposition consisting of twenty-one Garret FitzGeralds! In the Fine Gael/Labour coalition government from 1973 to May 1977, though he had been shadow spokesman on finance, Garret FitzGerald became Minister for Foreign Affairs. Ireland's membership of the EEC however transformed the role of foreign affairs and that to a great extent was due to the ability, charm, appetite for hard work, linked with idealism, and re-inforced by the fluency in the French language, of her new foreign minister. Garret FitzGerald's reputation burgeoned both at home and with Europe's politicians and officials. From chapters seven to ten the ever sensitive issues raised by the mounting tensions in the North made the Foreign Minister's task an extremely delicate, frustrating and crucial one. The road to Sunningdale, the sad dénouement of the talks, the 'misguided' efforts of British politicians' overtures to the IRA, the failure to use the army to break the loyalist workers' strike, the atrocious killings of the '70s are all written of here in tones of regret. With Liam Cosgrave's resignation in the aftermath of the election defeat of the National Coalition government in June 1977, Garret FitzGerald was elected leader of Fine Gael without a contest; he promised the party he would be a full time leader and for a decade — in the event he was leader for nine and three-quarter years, and twice in fairly rapid succession, Taoiseach (1981-82) and (1982-87).

In the space of three chapters FitzGerald charts the tortuous negotiations leading to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. This is fascinating material for the future historians since full access to the documentation is likely to be restricted until the years 2013 to 2015. It was greatly to the author's credit that under duress and uncertainty he steadfastly pursued his aim to bring about an agreement with Mrs. Thatcher which both of them signed at Hillsborough, Co. Down on 15 November 1985.

Many commentators on FitzGerald's political record may say it lacked a sense of distinctive Irish national identity to gain long term ground support. He suffered from the strong opposition to his liberal ideas seen for examples in the debates over contraception, abortion and divorce and particularly in the hostility of the right wing of the Catholic lobby, 'the true guardians of the faith'. His constitutional amendment on abortion, intellectually defensible, was perhaps too complex to get full acceptance. In the famous referendum on divorce he points out how the Irish hierarchy's anti-divorce formal statement gained widespread adherence against the government's amendment gaining a 63% majority against the proposed constitutional amendment. The brief correspondence between himself and Cardinal Tómas Ó'Fiach on the divorce issue, cut short by the tragic death of the cardinal, is printed as Appendix One to the autobiography. The only other appendix is the address he gave at the memorial service for the British Ambassador, Christopher Ewart-Biggs and Judith Cooke in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on 28 July 1976.

All in a Life demands the respect and attention of everyone with an interest in modern Irish politics, Anglo-Irish relations, and Church/State issues, not to speak of those with a curiosity about Dr. Garret FitzGerald, an outstanding

Irish and European politician of our time. Autobiography is unfinished business; may we welcome a second volume?

JOHN MCGURK

A MUSICAL JOURNEY

Five Centuries of Music in Venice. H. C. Robbins Landon and John Julius Norwich. Thames and Hudson, 1990. £15.95.

This book is designed as an accompaniment to the Channel Four television series 'Maestro: a Musical Journey Through Venice'. The present reviewer has not seen the series and has therefore had to treat the book on its own merits; a pretty slender affair it is. It is undoubtedly beautiful to behold: the illustrations are magnificent, but there are far too many and the text is smothered by them. Fewer and more carefully selected plates would have made a more effective contribution to the usefulness of the whole.

Five chapters are devoted to each century in turn, from the sixteenth to our own. In each case, a short preamble by Lord Norwich on the general cultural context is followed by the main chapter by Professor Landon, who takes a somewhat Olympian view of the history of Venetian music as a procession of great names. Thus the chapter on the seventeenth century is largely devoted to Monteverdi and that on the eighteenth to Vivaldi; neither of these composers can be said to have been neglected by modern musical scholarship. Professor Landon will know that Alan Curtis, in his recent edition of *L'incoronazione di Poppea,* considers that some of the music, including the 'astonishing' closing love duet, is probably not by Monteverdi at all but possibly by Francesco Sacrati; however, no mention is made here of this discovery. Too much space is devoted to Monteverdi's life before his Venetian period — space which might have been devoted to placing Monteverdi more firmly in the Venetian context or to consideration of other relevant topics. The chapter on the twentieth century is paltry; I cannot believe that barely four pages of text are sufficient to say all that can be said on this subject.

All in all, this is a pleasant, easy-to-read book, suitable for the coffee-tables of those for whom 'baroque' music and a passion for Vivaldi are essential badges of good breeding. It is not, however, a serious study of the subject.

NICK CHADWICK

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

The Honourable Company. John Keay. Harper Collins. 475pp. £20.00.

What a marvellous story is that of the East India Company! More than that of any other historic company, even the Hudson Bay. And John Keay tells it well, humanely and spicily, as well as all we need about organization, background, etc. For one thing the story is far more variegated and widespread. The Company was founded at the end of the Elizabethan age to push trade in the East Indies — that meant then practically the whole of the 'gorgeous East.' Mr. Keay gives us the spectrum, the trade with China and Japan, the Arabian Gulf, the East Indies, India, the lot.

Hitherto we have seen the Company almost entirely in terms of India — naturally enough when the activities of a trading company or, rather of its men on the spot, led to the extraordinary upshot of the Empire in India. This was never wished by the 'territory-shy' Company, bent only on trade and profits, but was dragged — protesting all the while — into taking on more and more responsibilities in the chaos and conflicts, the vacuities and gaps, the breakdown of native India. Fundamentally, British rule had to fill the gap left by the decline and fall of the Moghul Empire.

It is possible that Clive foresaw the potentiality, even the necessity of undertaking empire, and was a proto-imperialist. The greatest British ruler of them all, Warren Hastings, was not. 'No other Governor General or Viceroy would last anything like as long as Hastings and no other would approach his profound understanding of India or his affection for its peoples.' India had been and was a great nation, and should be administered by its own laws and customs — which he was devoted to studying. He was, like all the Company's servants, opposed to direct British rule; yet circumstances and the appalling crisis of the war with the American Colonies and half Europe compelled him to take on more than he bargained for.

The impeachment of this great man was a disgrace to the country. Burke may have been right about the American Colonies, but he was not right about India. However, it gave full scope, nine years of it, to his Irish verbosity.

The book gives us the Company's story up to its inevitable fading out, with the take-over of responsibilities by the government at home, from the time of the Napoleonic War. Hence the story is filled with the struggles for Far Eastern trade, with the Portuguese, then the Dutch, lastly the French. Dupleix had grander imperialist designs than any British traders ever had — except again for Clive.

It is new to me that the rout of the Spanish Armada had its repercussion in the Far East, it gave a lift to the English name only now belatedly coming into focus. The story is full of fun and fury — nice to think of the *Red Dragon* putting on a performance of *Hamlet* on board. The innocent newcomers were in for some surprises. Sultans in Sumatra had no hesitation in exercising their *droit de seigneur*.

One is impressed by the tales of astonishing hardship and endurance, the fearful mortality on the ships and from the climate, the plagues and diseases, the wrecks and disasters. In the struggle for survival it was the strongest who came through, one feels that anyone who got away with some of the swag — it was a free-for-all — deserved it. The Dutch torture and massacre of the English at Amboina — when they were supposed to be allies — ended their attempt to get into the spice trade on the spot. It is a shocking story, even in what Mr. Keay calls a 'brutal age'. (Our own has been worse, on a far larger scale.)

It is the fashion to denigrate the achievements of empire: to denigrate those of the East India Company and of the Raj it led to — an astonishing episode in world history — is simple ignorance. As for the Company, there are for anybody to see its creations of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, Hong Kong and Singapore.

A. L. Rowse

CAPITALISM, COMMUNISM AND LAND

Now the Synthesis. Edited by Richard Noyes. Shepheard Walwyn. £14.95.

Who is not either despairing or having doubts about a lasting solution being found to the economic sicknesses which have been destabilising nations both communist and capitalist, and having such disastrous effects on the planet? This book shows how the tension can be resolved.

It comprises a collection of ten papers which explore the synthesis of Capitalism and Communist Socialism; they were in preparation before the startling events during the last months of 1989, which corroborated their thesis. Included is a recent open letter addressed to Mikhail Gorbachev which was signed by three Nobel prize-winning economists and a list of distinguished scholars.

The effect on me of reading the book as a whole was liberating: Gramsci's 'Pessimism of the intelligence, optimism of the will' was synthesised into confidence. Three of the papers spontaneously roused what would be seditious thoughts, were there not the possibility for Constitutional change. What emerges is new light on different facets of the philosophy of Karl Marx's contemporary, Henry George, which Marx repudiated at the time, whereas President Roosevelt held George to be one of America's greatest thinkers. Last December Milton Friedman in the *Wall Street Journal* raised the importance of Henry George's philosophy.

The distinguished American editor, Richard Noyes, believes in the coming Millenium with all its dimensions. 'History is giving birth', he declares with 'the world at the crossroads of a new epoch' after two centuries of industrial strife. What is needed is 'a holistic philosophy'. Necessity will produce a new paradigm which will incorporate duty toward the planet, making it no longer possible to separate social from environmental issues. Of Henry George he says, 'His vision of a new society and economic efficiency rests on two inalienable rights: the freedom of the individual, and the right of equal access to the fruits of nature'. Henry George distinguished between land as land, and land exploited for wealth.

Leo Tolstoy was a committed follower of Henry George's philosophy with its underlying spiritual element, and understood exactly what he was getting at in *Social Problems* and *Progress & Poverty*. He went so far as to present a proposal for land value taxation to the last Czar; it was turned down flat (unwisely). In much the same way our Labour Government threw out (unwisely) the recommendations of the Peckham Pioneer Health Centre, in favour of Beveridge's mis-named National Health Service with its built-in defects.

Fred Harrison, Director of the Centre for Incentive Taxation, echoes Richard Noyes' call in his 'Post-Socialism and the Single Tax: a holistic philosophy'. He had investigated the structural defects which have been deliberately kept intact in the foundations of market systems around the world by governments conspiring with vested interests. He gives a thoroughly disturbing rationale for why everything is breaking down, and comes up with the answer.

Sir Richard Body, the organic farming conservative (sic) MP delineates the bugbear as 'protection'. He declares that 'nature is on the side of free trade', and explicates magnificently in 'Protectionism, Rent and the Dynamics of Agricultural Degradation'. It amounts to an absolute indictment of protection. He uses the word 'land' in the wider sense of 'natural environment', which he suggests Henry George did, and proposes the re-introduction of the concept of husbandry with its careful farming. He shows clearly how free trade in food would bring down land prices, to immediately reduce the demand for intensive farming. Down would come the present demoniac demand for pesticides with their pollution of person and planet, caused for so long by agricultural protectionism.

Henry George likened the mentality of owning land to that of slave owning. It can be imagined that if the planet could, she would divest herself of all vested multinationalising individuals who claim to own any part of her. Boris Yeltsin is quoted as saying, 'People here do not understand the concept of buying and selling land. The land is like a mother. You don't sell your mother'. It has the ring of Chief Seattle's despair.

Now the Synthesis provides a sound case for the planet, our future, taking precedence over man's self-seeking desires. The book may provoke a revolution.

That is, in one's thinking: once thought, things begin to change. The very idea of man owning a mountain is absurd, is it not?

RODNEY AITCHEY

ROSE MACAULAY — A RARE INTELLIGENCE

Rose Macaulay: A Writer's Life. Jane Emery. John Murray. £25.00.

Rose Macaulay has always intrigued her admirers. Her novels are wonderfully funny at different levels from the shout of laughter to the *rire dans l'âme* and yet have a core of deep seriousness. She can wring her readers' withers with sympathy and grief for her characters and at the same time change the focus so that her story and characters merge into the eternal nature of things in a way that is oddly comforting. Her fascination is not simply that which the famous writer always arouses. Her extraordinary background, her appearance and manner ('two parts tomboy to one part perfect lady') and her deep and intelligent Christian faith were strangely incongruous with her twenty-five year long adulterous love affair so lyrically described in *The Towers of Trebizond,* her last and most famous novel, written two years before her death, when she was 75. Those who read her long to know more about her, to penetrate somehow into this elegant, witty, detached and yet passionate mind.

Jane Emery's book satisfies much of this faintly prurient curiosity. She treats with comprehensive brevity Rose Macaulay's background of 'intellectual aristocracy' (Macaulays, Conybeares, Trevelyans, Arnolds, Huxleys and Vaughans and their friends and connections) before describing with elegant economy her parents' courtship, early married life and the young family's move to Italy for reasons of health. There follows a description of an idyllic, free-range childhood on the Italian Riviera combined with the best kind of warm, Victorian family life, though even at this delicious stage in Rose Macaulay's life there is a worm in the bud in the person of Eleanor, an unloved sibling, whose treatment chills us and which probably wove a dark thread through Rose's conscience. There is, too, the dawning threat that Rose's mother, Grace, with her biased affections, is going to become difficult, as indeed she does, restricting her daughter's freedom in later years. But on the whole we see the seminal sparkling, joyful *idéal* so constant throughout Rose Macaulay's work.

The family returned to England eight years later — Oxford, Aberystwyth, Cambridge and the prison gates clanged shut after the warmth and freedom of Varezze. Rose emerges as a character of fun and wit and great intelligence, capable of forming deep and lasting friendships, not least with Rupert Brooke who introduced her into the star-studded London literary circles in which she shone. For the rest of her life, from the salons of her youth to the parties and dinners of her later years no party was complete without her. She numbered among her friends all the great literary names of her time — Ivy Compton-Burnett, Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, V. Sackville-West, Gilbert Murray and Victor Gollancz to name but some. It is regrettable that she had no Boswell, for her witty and profound conversation 'in that high-pitched staccato voice' which 'stayed for years with old friends' have, like Sidney Smith's legendary talk, gone largely unrecorded. Jane Emery does her best to fill this gap and quotes copiously from Rose Macaulay's writings to illustrate her 'rare ironic intelligence'.

The outbreak of war in 1914 partially liberated Rose from irksome family ties, as it did many young women of the time. Working in the Ministry of War she met, in 1918, Gerald O'Donovan, a former Catholic priest who had

resigned his priesthood on a matter of strong principle and was married and had two children. He was 46 and Rose was ten years younger. They formed an intense friendship which later became a love affair that lasted until his death in 1942. '... each year was better than the one before, love and joy drowning remorse, till in the end it scarcely struggled for life'. Thus Rose Macaulay describes the illicit love between Laurie and Vere in *The Towers of Trebizond*, 'her own story'. Neither wished to break up Gerald's marriage. Rose wanted 'love and no ties'. They would meet in London in Rose's flat and they stole paradisial journeys together in Italy, Southern France and Spain, but they led separate social lives in London because of gossip.

Mrs. Emery's book is deeply researched, interesting, informative and what used to be called 'a good read'. She opens a window through which we see Rose Macaulay's life — the personalities of her parents; her fearless love of swimming and journeys and ruins; her agility on the perilous ladders of the London Library, her intrepid exploring of the bomb-sites left by the blitz. We see her climbing among the fallen columns of Greek temples, riding mules and sleeping rough. We see her in her book-lined, manuscript-strewn London flat, reading and re-reading volumes from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'mainly poetry, biography, letters, voyages, history, dictionaries and essays'. (She judged almost all fiction ephemeral and laughed at herself as a novelist saying that novel-writing was 'the last resort of the spiritually destitute'.) We see her driving an ambulance through the blacked-out streets of war-time London, appalled at the scenes of human agony she witnessed. We see the influence on Rose's life of the exceptional people she knew, of her own heredity and of the literary sources she assimilated (the loss of her library in the blitz was one of the heaviest blows she endured).

The book does appear, however, to be written from the standpoint of the processed American feminist. The literary criticism, which is an important part of the book is laced with a large amount of psychoanalysis which lays a heavy hand on the subtle and elusive wit of Rose Macaulay. But the most serious short-coming of the book is Mrs. Emery's inability to understand that vital part of Rose Macaulay's psyche, her Faith. She does not appear to see Rose's awareness of her own sin as an adulteress in any terms other than guilt-feelings. When Rose describes herself to Fr. Johnson (her distant cousin, much-loved correspondent and spiritual director) in Quintilian's words as *dejecta, abjecta, indigna and ignobilis* Mrs. Emery says that these 'learned Latin' words do not translate into the language of reason: that these 'are adjectives of strong negative feeling — self-hate and depression'. To use modern psychological clichés to describe that spiritual state the human soul has reached when it perceives its own sin, its helplessness and its need of God is really to miss the point. Although Mrs. Emery sees the aesthetic and the social attractions of the Anglican churches Rose frequented she does not understand the underlying Faith, nor that the realisation that one is *dejecta, abjecta, indigna and ignobilis* is the beginning of hope, forgivness and recovery.

Even so, as an informative biography it answers many questions and describes so vividly the course of Rose Macaulay's life that I felt utterly bereft at her death. I was immensely grateful for the appendix which Mrs. Emery so thoughtfully provided to tide one over this regret. It is an article, one of a series of Auto-Obituaries by well-known authors published in the *Listener* in 1936, in which her outrageous imagination and soaring wit combine in a piece of such sparkling perfection that one closes the book much cheered that, though dead, Rose Macaulay lives on in her works. CORNELIA ODDIE

ORWELL'S CHOICE

Orwell: The Authorised Biography. Michael Shelden. Heineman. £18.50

This is the authorised biography of George Orwell — authorised that is by the literary agent who controls George Orwell's estate — and is not to be confused with the 'official' biography by Bernard Crick which Orwell's widow commissioned and later wished to suppress. Shelden criticises Crick's biography for its emphasis on the public side of Eric Blair/George Orwell's life, claiming, 'To pretend that Orwell's inner life is secondary to events in his public life is to reduce him to the level of a dry functionary. He was not a bloodless writer of dreary social tracts, and his life was anything but dull'. (p.7).

I found Shelden's handling of the political aspect of George Orwell far less convincing than Crick's, but he has new material on Orwell's relationship with his father, on his prep school, on his love affairs, on his difficulties with Victor Gollancz, and on his illnesses. The new material, which will be useful for future biographies, does not in itself provide new insights into Orwell's personality and work, both of which Shelden fails to get into focus. His comments on Orwell's novels are unilluminating; his comments on Orwell himself suggest something of his subject's lack of psychological and critical insight.

George Orwell was a man of real political commitment who had two striking gifts as a writer. One was his ability to communicate his own earnestness and indignation and sense of enduring values in a prose that people find difficult to stop reading. His other gift was his knack of putting across the frustration and self-loathing of the perpetual adolescent who is unable to find a niche in life. *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* and *Coming Up for Air* are third-rate novels that will be read, with fascinated self-recognition and a growing appetite for revolt, by young people so long as the smug suburban self-satisfaction of British bourgeois culture endures.

These gifts are at their least apparent in George Orwell's most famous works, *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* but it is arguable that these books owe their fame to their topicality rather than to any inherent merit. This aspect of George Orwell's career is explored in a book that is perhaps too recent for Professor Shelden to have used: John Rodden's *The Politics of Literary Reputation: The Making and Claiming of 'St. George' Orwell* (1989) Professor Shelden might however have picked up some useful ideas from Daphne Patai's *The Orwell Mystique* (1984).

George Orwell was not a very original thinker, but his lack of originality does not detract from the seriousness of his commitment, or his readiness to thrust himself into positions of physical discomfort, or even mortal danger, in pursuance of his political ideals. The firmness of his principles was rooted however in a more than averagely painful uncertainty about who and what he really was. He tried to escape from his status as an Old Etonian with a fervour generally more characteristic of minor public school boys employed by left-wing councils. He tried to escape from the racist assumptions instilled in him by his upbringing and his early career in Burma. He tried to live by a prep school code of honourableness and decency. He tried to think out a consistent attitude to organised Communism. He tried and tried without, it seems, ever beginning to question why it was personally so important to him to do these things. He tried to be George Orwell and to stop being Eric Blair. His haunted look was probably the result of heredity and ill-health, but one way or another Eric Blair kept coming back: his thin carefully trimmed

moustache, of the type favoured by travelling salesmen who wished to be mistaken for ex-officers, was his own choice, as was his death-bed marriage.

Sonia, ambitious, dominating, unimaginative, always careful to be in with the right set, the right clique, was in many respects the personification of all that Orwell had struggled against in his career as a writer. Shelden describes how, after the wedding at University College Hospital, the bride and witnesses 'went to the Ritz for a wedding dinner, with Orwell remaining behind in his bed.' (p.482). Perhaps he realised, lying on his death bed, that it was pointless to keep on struggling. He knew that immortality for a writer means becoming a commodity.

A. D. HARVEY

THE VIEW FROM FINCHLEY

Thatcher's People, an insider's account of the politics, the power and the personalities. John Ranelagh. Harper-Collins. £15.99.

John Ranelagh, who for four years was a member of the Conservative Research Department (1975-79), assembles a *Who's Who* of the thirty or more men who advised, made suggestions to, and wrote speeches for Mrs. Thatcher in the fifteen years of her leadership of the Conservative Party. He buttresses his lexicon with material from interviews with his 'victims', uses some of their remarks directly, and raids others that remain unattributed. So this is a shrewd, juicy, occasionally malicious, piece of writing: 'She doesn't have friends. If you were to say to her that there would be a dinner party for her and six friends, she wouldn't be able to fill the places'. 'She has three ideas: sound finance, strong defence, and little naughty bits should be hidden.' 'The Tory Party does not like brains. Thank God I don't have any.' (Willie Whitelaw.)

Behind the asperities, the name-dropping and the mini-biographies, this is an intriguing view of the think-tank inside No. 10, by one who, until ten years ago, was himself an insider. It suggests that the country has been governed for a decade by what Americans would call a kitchen-cabinet, not many of whom bothered with elections. Some of them indeed had fought for the enemy, the Labour Party, but had repented of their follies, and worked their passage home, even if into stormier waters. They saw themselves defending a free-enterprise society like guardsmen — they were all men — defending a laager under attack by the older Establishment, by the BBC and the chattering classes, and not least by the Church of England, long in the grip of Bishops who saw and still see themselves less as priests of an Old Order than as prophets of a new, as social engineers and politicians manqués, from Canterbury to Durham by way of Liverpool and Bath and Wells. The Thatcherite view of the economy was, in essence, American, or rather in the jargon of the professionals, Austrian — i.e. *ex-libris* Friedrich von Hayek; but they saw themselves as solvers of problems not as theorists. Those inside the fishbowl were more Methodist than Anglican, strikingly Jewish in personnel as well as ideology, and more Welsh than English. There is no one here identifiable as a Scot, except Adam Smith and David Hume; indeed there is only one reference to Scotland, and that to the curious address Mrs. Thatcher gave to the General Assembly of the Kirk, an address she did not — it seems — write herself. There are quite a few noted here who were not Thatcher's people, one in particular — Edward Heath. And there is one who was not only her mentor but one of her few heroes — Keith Joseph, whose portrait is one of the most vivid of all. John Ranelagh's book is an excellent and readable account of the Thatcher years, and his judgements are penetrating and stimulating.

ESMOND WRIGHT

SHORTER REVIEWS

The World Affairs Companion. (Simon & Schuster. £8.99.) This is a new edition in paperback of Gerald Segal's 'essential one-volume guide to global issues'. It consists of nine chapters. Three are concerned with the Power of Politics, Shaping the New Agenda, and Modern Warfare. Six chapters are each dealing with specific world areas. These are the New Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa. It is a useful informative volume which will be widely appreciated.

J. Armitage Robinson. (James Clarke & Co. £19.50.) T. F. Taylor's biography of the famous Dean of Wells is a welcome addition to the ranks of ecclesiastical biography. Robinson was one of that admirable breed of Victorian priests who were also scholars and first-rate researchers. Robinson's field was New Testament scholarship and eucharistic development but he was also interested in archaeology. He overcame an Evangelical upbringing to see the need for a reunited Christianity. One chapter is devoted to his work in the famous Malines conversations held in the 1920s to discuss ways forward for reunion of the Church of England with the See of Rome. Fascinating use is made of Robinson's diary for the period. This alone makes the book a 'must' for historians of the Church.

Gesualdo: The Man and his Music. (Clarendon Press, Oxford. £40.) In a second edition Professor Glenn Watkins has revised his 1973 book, which was a notable contribution to musicology, and has added a new chapter and epilogue bringing up to date the study of the composer. The murder of the prince's first wife is fully recounted, and a great deal of information is given about his life and character. The main part of the book, however, analyses in detail all the composer's work, including the hitherto neglected sacred music, and sets it in the context of developments in Italian music during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Chains of Empire. (Regency Press. £9.95.) This volume is the second in a series of three entitled **English Public Schools and Ritualistic Imperialism,** by Paul John Rich. This new study is concerned with 'English Public Schools, Masonic Cabalism, Historical Causality and Imperial Clubdom'. His main object is to examine the part played by these institutions both in the United Kingdom and more particularly in the growth of the British Commonwealth and Colonial Empire. For example, he places great stress on the influence of ex-public school boys in promoting their way of life throughout the Commonwealth. It is an interesting study and worth reading. One wonders where he obtains all his material, in spite of an extensive bibliography. What, for example, is the source of his Masonic information? There are plentiful illustrations which complete a book of much interest, if at times controversial.

Arthur Mizener: Literary Critic with a Political Conscience. (S. Gorley Putt, 25 Bailey Mews, Cambridge CB5 8DR. £6.00.) This 54-page collection of extracts 'from a private Anglo-American correspondence' is published by the editor. These letters from the American literary critic and biographer of Scott Fitzgerald offer an illuminating insight into Anglo-American relations and the two friends' individual intellectualism between 1935-1985, the years covered by the letters.

HALF YEAR INDEX — JULY-DECEMBER 1991

VOLUME 259

LS — Literary Supplement

ABEL, Betty: Quarterly Fiction Review, 213. LS 52, 110.
AITCHTEY, Rodney: LS 329.
ALNER, Jonathan and CHAN, Stephen: The Nature of Regional Conflict: A Review of 1990 — Part Three: The Legacy of Superpower Competition, 14. Part Four: Conflicts in the Regions of the Superpowers, 190. Part Five: Pure Regional Conflicts, 230.
AMLUND, Curtis Arthur: Lloyd George and Winston Churchill: Contrasts and Similarities, 263.
BARON, J. H. and MILES, M. F. R.: Art in Hospitals, 137.
BENN, Piers: Czech Students and Revolutionary Politics, 72.
BIFFEN, John, M.P.: LS 217.
BRIDGE, Tony: LS 109.
BRUCE, Donald: The War Poets of 1639: Carew, Sockling and Lovelace, 309.
CECCHERINI, Valerie: Helping the Children of Romania, 281.
CHADWICK, Nick: LS 328.
CHAN, Stephen and ALNER, Jonathan: The Nature of Regional Conflict: A Review of 1990 — Part Three: The Legacy of Superpower Competition, 14. Part Four. Conflicts in the Regions of the Superpowers, 190. Part Five: Pure Regional Conflicts, 230.
CHRISTOPHER, Ian: Japanese-American Trade Rivalry, 80.
DAVIES, Howard: Has the Poll Tax Killed British Local Government? 179.
WHITTINGTON-EGAN, Richard: LS 167.
GEBBELS, Tim: The Sound of Radio Drama, 40. Transatlantic Eavesdropping: Minnesota by Air, 128.
GLASGOW, Eric: Public Libraries in England, 147. Five Days in a National Health Hospital, 285.
GOLDWERT, Marvin: The Future of the American Metropolis, 82.
GREEN, Laurence: World Theatre in London, 259.
GROSS, Anthony: Exhibiting a Massive Monarch, 98.
HARVEY, A. D.: Road to Rot: The New 'Oxford English Dictionary', 84. Academic Silver Anniversary: Personal Impressions of University since 1966, 196. LS 161, 222, 276, 333.
HASHMI, Alamgir. Poems: Ask Not; Crusoe's Island, 205.
HEALEY, Nigel M.: The End of Nation States? 242.
HODGSON, Peter: The Seeds of Time: Scientists and the Public, 57.
JULIUS, Muriel: Fauvism and the Supremacy of Colour, 93. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec — Grandeur and Misery, 315.
LAMMIE, David: Britain's Invisible Exports, 290.
LAND, Thomas: Banks to Control Mediterranean Pollution, 133. South Asia Takes a Big Step Towards Disarmament, 305.
LOWENSTEIN, L. F.: The Psychological Understanding of Crime, 27.
MACALUSO, Sandra: Poem: Of Time and Tides, 67.
McGURK, John: LS 326.
MACKINTOSH, Paul: Hong Kong: Paying the Price for Britain's Mistakes, 248. Poem: Home, 289. LS 51.
MALLINSON, J. D.: Poem: Simone Weil (1909-1943), 262.
MILES, M. F. R. and BARON, J. H.: Art in Hospitals, 137.
MITCHELL, Austin, M.P.: Britain and the Euro-Blancmange, 174.
MORTIMER, Molly: The Longest War, 91. LS 50, 53, 106, 275, 279.
MORTON, James: LS 223.
MULLEN, Richard: Historical Reflections on the Revolution in Russia, 169. LS 164.
MUNSON, James: The Ghosts of Versailles and Oxford, 254. Christmas with Queen Victoria, 319. LS 218.
MURAY, Leo: Still the Gulf Crisis, 23. The Swiss Saga, 68. Maastricht is the Question, 225. LS 49, 107, 219, 273.
NEEDLER, Martin C.: Papua New Guinea: Where the Stone Age Meets the Space Age, 19.
NEWMAN, Sarah: Teaching Contemporary History, 151. The Commonwealth and the Suez Crisis of 1956, 207.
ODDIE, Cornelia: LS 331.
PALAN, Ronen: Misguided Nationalism: The Causes and Prospects for Slovenian Independence, 119.
PATTISON, Bruce: LS 165, 221.
PENNINGTON, Richard: 'Night & Day': A Contribution to Literary History, 267.
RADO, Emil: Hungary One Year On, 1. Challenging Racism with the Scottish Police, 252.
RAMAN, A. S.: Rajiv Gandhi: The End of an Era, 4. Prime Minister Rao of India, 183.
RICKMAN, H. P.: A Great German Novel, 45.
ROWSE, A. L.: Voice of New Zealand: The Poetry of Allen Curnow, 37. Sartre: Beau-Ideal of a Left Intellectual, 87. Cornwall in History and Literature, 157. LS 328.
SALLON, Sarah: The Train, 270.
SESHADRI, B.: The Narmada Valley Project: Economic Miracle or Environmental Disaster? 75.
SHIPMAN, David: Cinema: A Quarterly Review, 102.
SHORTER REVIEWS: LS 55, 111, 168, 224, 280, 335.
TIBBS, Molly: LS 277.
TONG, Raymond: Five Poems: At Nimrud, Iraq; Kuwait: A Memory; Al-Ukhaidir, Iraq; Ashurbanipal; Desert Thoughts, 154. Son of the Soil, 298.
VICKERS, Simon: Travelling Through Perestroika: Across the USSR by Bicycle, 113.
WAKELING, Patrick: Sylvia Plath: A Balance of Loss and Gain, 142.
WARD, Ruth: Mozart: Saint or Sinner? 34.
WISEMAN, John A.: Democratic Resurgence in Black Africa, 7. Botswana's Silver Jubilee: A Quarter Century of Democracy and Development, 294.
WOY, Paul C.: Rebirth of a Nation? Mongolia's Reincarnated Religious Leader, 234.
WRIGHT, Esmond: LS 105, 161, 164, 216, 274, 278, 334.

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